





THE GOLDEN HIND SERIES  
Edited by Milton Waldman



H A W K I N S

# **THE GOLDEN HIND SERIES**

*Volumes published and  
in preparation*

**DRAKE**

**JOHN SMITH**

**HUDSON**

**RALEIGH**

**FROBISHER**

**DAMPIER**

**MAGELLAN**

**CAPTAIN SCOTT**

**HAWKINS**

**GRENVILLE**



SIR JOHN HAWKINS,  
AGED 58

*From the picture now in Plymouth Town Hall*

# *Sir John Hawkins*

*By*

*PHILIP GOSSE*



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## P R E F A C E



N the following pages an attempt has been made to give a portrait of a great Englishman. For more than three hundred years, John Hawkins has been little more than a name, and for several reasons he has been denied the high position to which his talents and his character entitle him. This injustice is in part due to the fact that he lived at a time in our history when more great men flourished than at any other period. In this short space, in the reign of one Monarch, many great reputations were made in one branch of activity alone, that of sea enterprise. The names of Drake, Raleigh, Humphrey Gilbert, John Davis, Frobisher, Hudson and Grenville are only a few of the best known in a crowd of remarkable navigators and explorers who were the contemporaries of John Hawkins.

Out of this galaxy of talent, one name stands above all others, that of Francis Drake. The genius of Drake found its counterpart in Hawkins, although, as will be shown, no two men could have been more fundamentally different. Although kinsmen and lifelong friends, they were mentally far apart. Drake, the younger of the two by ten years, was a brilliant opportunist. Ruthless, he

was impulsive, but of unerring judgment, and, it goes without saying, as brave as man could be, both physically and morally.

His older kinsman, John Hawkins, was the opposite in everything except his quality of courage.

Where Drake would rush in, Hawkins would tread with caution and craft. He was methodical in everything he undertook, whether in reporting a corrupt councillor or in attacking a hostile Spanish town. He was sound to the very core ; never ruffled ; stubborn to the last degree, he contrived to get his own way, which was generally the right way, by hard work and steady persuasion. No undertaking was ventured upon until it had been carefully and meticulously considered, weighed out and calculated. He was a grave, sober-minded man, and though not learned as far as the arts go, he was very well educated. His letters show this, and are better written and expressed than those of most of his contemporaries born in a higher sphere of life than he.

Another reason for this overshadowing of Hawkins by his contemporaries was his modesty ; he never boasted of his own successes, though he had as much reason to do so as any man of his time. Nor did he ever say a harsh word about any man, other than a Spaniard, except on one memorable occasion when Francis Drake deserted him at San Juan de Ulua. This he mentions once but never refers to again.

Even in the last and tragic voyage of Drake and

Hawkins, when the two opposite schools of thought and action were so lamentably brought out, and bickering and misunderstanding caused failure and disaster, one sees these two men retaining their deep respect for each other.

It is strange how a stigma will stick to a man's character. It has been the fashion for the last hundred years to throw calumny on Hawkins for having been the first Englishman to engage in the Slave trade. The folly of this accusation is twofold. For one thing, John Hawkins was not the first of his race to engage in this traffic in human merchandise, and for another he did it at a time when no disgrace was attached to a trade which was looked upon as ordinary and legitimate. Also, let us not forget that for many years the English had practically a monopoly of the importation of negroes into the American Settlements and colonies, and no voice of protest was raised against it.

This book will not have been altogether in vain if it helps to get rid, once and for all, of the misnomer of "Sea Dog," first applied to John Hawkins some years ago and which has stuck to him ever since.

If there was one Elizabethan seaman who was not a "Sea Dog" it was John Hawkins. The term pictures some loud-voiced, rough-bearded, uncouth figure, untidily clad, coarse in body and mind. The man before us was the opposite. He was as famous for his courtly manners as for the gorgeousness of his apparel. The cabins he occupied aboard his ships were

sumptuously furnished with rare brocade and tapestries and he dined off gold and silver plate. Even his enemies admitted his charm of manner and address.

It must not be thought that this book is in any sense an apology for John Hawkins—he needs none—but it is the ambition of the writer to attempt to explain him, and to give him the position he so amply deserves of a country that owes him a debt that can never be fully repaid.

I do not pretend to have discovered anything new about Hawkins, and I frankly admit to having made free use of the important researches of Mr. J. A. Williamson, and can plead, if excuse is called for, that no future historian or student of the Elizabethan period can afford to ignore, or to fail to make good use of his investigations.

I must also thank Mr. G. E. Manwaring of the London Library, for bringing to my notice many out-of-the-way records of Hawkins, and for reading through the manuscript; Mrs. Marden, who has given me much valuable assistance; and lastly Dr. A. J. Durden Smith, for reading and correcting the proofs.

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## SIR JOHN HAWKINS

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S I R   J O H N   H A W K I N S

## CHAPTER I

### EARLY DAYS AT PLYMOUTH



JOHN HAWKINS was born at Plymouth in the year 1532 and spent his youth at his father's fine house which stood in Kinterbury Street. This street still exists, though in little but name. To-day Kinterbury Street is a dark squalid thoroughfare, bordered by warehouses and factories, with no traces nor suggestion of its ancient pride and respectability. Behind the old house stood a large walled garden in which the little John used to play ; and when he was older he would walk down to his father's quay close by, where the tall ships lay, and the sunburnt sailors lounged and yarned. In these surroundings, and in such a home, how could a boy grow up but with a love of the sea and a thirst for travel ? How much more so, when the boy's father and grandfather and big brother were all sailors and, no doubt, told him stories of their adventures in such distant lands as the Guinea coast, the Canary Islands and the wonderful far-off tropical country known as Brazil. Had he not, as he grew a little older, followed his father's finger as it traced on the *Atlas of Jean Rotz* the voyages he had made ? Even America was shown on that map, just a long, irregular coast-line, with nothing beyond it. Soon he learned where to find the famous Spanish Main, about which his father and his seafaring friends used to talk in the evenings.

Then there were the warehouses, sometimes filled with

strange foreign merchandise brought home in his father's ships : clubs curiously carved by savages, and bows and arrows made by cannibal tribes. The arrows he must not play with nor touch for fear that they were poisoned.

Thus from year to year the boy grew wise in matters of the sea. The names of the sails and the spars and ropes on the ships, at first so complicated, gradually became familiar to him. In the office and in the warehouse he was taught the whole business of a merchant—what goods should be bought to trade with the negroes on the Guinea coast, and what would sell best to the Spaniards in Spain or the Canary Islands. His grandfather and father had both traded with these lands, and both, as John afterwards, had been Mayor of Plymouth and had sat in the House of Commons as member of parliament for the West of England town.

His school days were soon over and the more important part of his education begun. The rudiments of navigation learned, he was at last allowed to go to sea on a short voyage to Bordeaux on one of his father's ships, which brought back to Plymouth barrels of French wine. John Hawkins grew up into a strong, self-willed lad. When he was twenty he got into a serious scrape. It was not his own fault. John White, a barber and a bully, attacked him, and young Hawkins struck back in self-defence and killed him.

Mr. Nicholas Slannyngh, the King's Coroner at Plymouth, held an inquest on the dead John White and, after hearing what the witnesses had to say, granted a Royal pardon to young Hawkins.

When John's education was completed, he knew how to manage a merchant's office, how to navigate and sail a ship, and a good deal about the rudiments of shipbuilding. While still a young man he seems to have set up in business as a merchant on his own account, though in close association with his elder brother, William. In 1556,

when he was twenty-four years old, John spent a long while in France, applying to the courts for the restitution of a ship called the "Peter." This ship had originally belonged to a Breton owner, and the Hawkins brothers had taken her with one of their privateering ships. Later on they had been so rash as to send her with a cargo into Brest, where she was at once seized by the French port authorities and restored to her original owner. In those days it was the usual practice, in time of war, for armed merchant ships to sail with commissions as privateers, and the Hawkins brothers owned several such vessels. These private men-of-war were commanded by Devon gentlemen. It occasionally happened that the privateer deteriorated into little better than a pirate. One flagrant example of this is the case of Captain Thomas Stukeley, a Devon man of good family, who first commanded one of the Hawkins' privateering ships in 1557. A few years later "Lusty" Stukeley sailed, under the patronage of the Queen, with a small squadron to form a colony in Florida, but once out of the Channel he went a-pirating and for two years preyed on Spanish, French and Portuguese shipping, carrying his ill-gotten gains to Kinsale, where he was hand in glove with the Tyrone chief, Shan O'Neil. He at last became so notorious as to cause the English Ambassador to the Spanish court at Madrid "to hang his head for shame."

Of Hawkins' life between the ages of twenty and thirty we know very little. Probably most of this time was spent at sea, sailing hither and thither in his own or his father's ships, carrying cargoes to France, Spain or Portugal. According to Hakluyt he made several voyages to the Canary Islands. This group was in the possession of Spain, but Englishmen were permitted to trade there. Hakluyt writes : "Master John Hawkins having made divers voyages to the Isles of the Canaries, and there by his good and upright dealing being grown

in love and favour with the people, informed himself amongst them by diligent inquisition, of the state of the West India, whereof he had received some knowledge by the instructions of his father, but increased the same by the advertisements and reports of the people.” Again and again this pleasing trait in the character of Hawkins shows itself, this aptitude for making friends with people wherever he went. Evidently he had a captivating personality, which was on one particular occasion mentioned by a man who had every reason to fear and dislike Hawkins. This man was the Treasurer of Rio de la Hacha on the Spanish Main, who after a long struggle, being forced against his will to grant a licence to trade by the stubborn Englishman, turned angrily to his Spanish townsmen and declared : “ There is not one of you that knoweth John Hawkins. He is such a man that any man talking with him hath no power to deny him anything he doth request. This hath made me hitherto to do right well to keep myself far from him, and not any villainy that I know in him, but great nobility.”

All his time was not spent at sea, for he still found opportunities, like the true Hawkins he was, to take part in the affairs of his native town. At the age of twenty-three he was admitted a freeman of Plymouth. There were two “ John Hawkynses ” admitted freemen in the same year and, to distinguish the future Admiral, he was entered on the roll as “ marynr,” showing that already he had entered upon his chosen profession, while in the same year he was registered as the owner of a ship, the “ Peter of Plymouth.”

The years immediately following were spent either at sea or else at the family counting-house in Plymouth. In 1558, the year in which Queen Elizabeth came to the throne, an event took place which had a considerable effect on his career in after years. This was his marriage to Katherine, the daughter of Benjamin Gonson, Treasurer

of the Navy. Shortly after his marriage, John Hawkins joined a group of London merchants who were interested in the Canary and Guinea trade. Since he had become an authority on the Canary trade, and was hand in glove with many of the chief Spanish inhabitants of those islands, he was likely to be a valuable addition to the syndicate. Another point in his favour was that his father-in-law not only held the post of Treasurer to the Navy, but was also a member of the newly formed London Company.

In 1561 Hawkins took up his residence in the capital, signing himself "John Hawkins of London." Here he was able to put before his partners the details of the grand scheme which he had formed. Amongst the members of the syndicate, besides Benjamin Gonson and himself, were Sir Lionel Ducket, Sir Thomas Lodge, William Winter—surveyor of the Navy—and others, all important and wealthy citizens of London.

The plan he proposed was both daring and original. During his visits to the Canary Islands Hawkins had, as we know from Hakluyt, made many friends, and always kept his ears open for any information he could get about the West Indies. One thing in particular he had heard which excited his imagination. He had been told that the chief commodity required by the Spanish colonists in the West Indies was negroes, who were needed to work in the silver mines and on the plantations. Hawkins' proposal was to send ships to the Guinea coast, there to buy, or procure by other means, cargoes of negroes, and then to carry them to the West Indies to sell for gold, pearls, or any other valuable merchandise. This scheme was approved of by Hawkins' partners, and money was subscribed to procure and fit out the necessary ships. By the following year all the preparations were completed, and John Hawkins set out on his first long voyage.

Although the intended voyage was, for those days, a long one, John was not the first of his family to venture

so far afield. His father, William, who was not only a trader, but had been an officer in the Navy of King Henry VIII, and had commanded at one time the "Great Galley"—one of the Royal ships—will be remembered as the first Englishman to sail his own ship to Brazil. This was in 1528, when "he armed a tall and goodlie ship of his own of 200 tons called the 'Paul of Plymouth.'" Hitherto English Captains had not ventured further afield than trading voyages to France, Flanders or the Mediterranean. William Hawkins made at least three such long voyages, calling in each case at the Guinea coast in Africa to procure a cargo on the way out, and then crossing the South Atlantic Ocean to trade in the Brazils.

Like his illustrious son John, he had a happy gift of making friends wherever he went, so much so that, on the occasion of his second voyage to Brazil in 1530, he persuaded a native Chief to return to England with him, leaving behind him a seaman called Martin Cockeram to act as a hostage for the Captain's good faith.

The Chief was a great success in England and was presented at the Court of King Henry VIII at Whitehall, where he caused much astonishment, which was not to be wondered at when we learn that "in his cheeks were holes made, and therein were small bones planted, standing an inch out from the said holes, which in his own country was reported for a great bravery." We have, alas, no record to tell what the Chief thought about bluff King Hal and his courtiers.

After spending a year in England, being feted and gaped at, the Chieftain set out with Hawkins to Brazil, but unfortunately died before reaching his native land, this sad calamity being attributed to the "change of air and alteration of diet." Knowing what we do of the insanitary and stifling conditions of life aboard a sixteenth-century ship, this fatal termination to the European trip of an unsophisticated Brazilian native is not to be wondered at.

Naturally fears were entertained as to the fate of the innocent and trusting hostage, Martin Cockeram, who well might have to forfeit his life for the unforeseen decease of the Chief. Happily for everybody, and particularly for Martin, when William Hawkins arrived on the Brazilian coast and the unfortunate situation was explained to the Chief's subjects, they at once handed Martin back, safe and sound, and he returned to live in Plymouth, in possession of this one great adventure with which to entertain his friends during the remainder of a long but otherwise totally obscure life.

Before we follow John Hawkins on his voyage it will not be out of place to say a few words more about his father. By his bold enterprises to Brazil and Guinea he gained for himself both fame and riches. In 1532 he was elected Mayor of Plymouth, an honour which was repeated five years later, when he was also chosen to represent the borough in Parliament ; and he remained a member of the House of Commons until 1554 when he died, a man of wealth, position and esteem, leaving to his two sons, William and John, great possessions, a solid business and a respected name.

Finally let us quote what John Prince in his *Worthies of Devon* has to say of this remarkable family. "The Hawkinnes were," he says, "Gentlemen of worshipful extraction for several descents but made more worshipful by their deeds. For three generations they were the master spirits of Plymouth in its most illustrious days ; its leading merchants, its bravest sailors, serving oft and well in the civic chair and in the House of Commons. For three generations too they were in the van of English seamanship, founders of England's commerce in south, west and east ; stout in fight, of quenchless spirit in adventure—a family of merchants, statesmen, and heroes, to whom our country affords no parallel."

## CHAPTER II

### FIRST TWO SLAVING VOYAGES

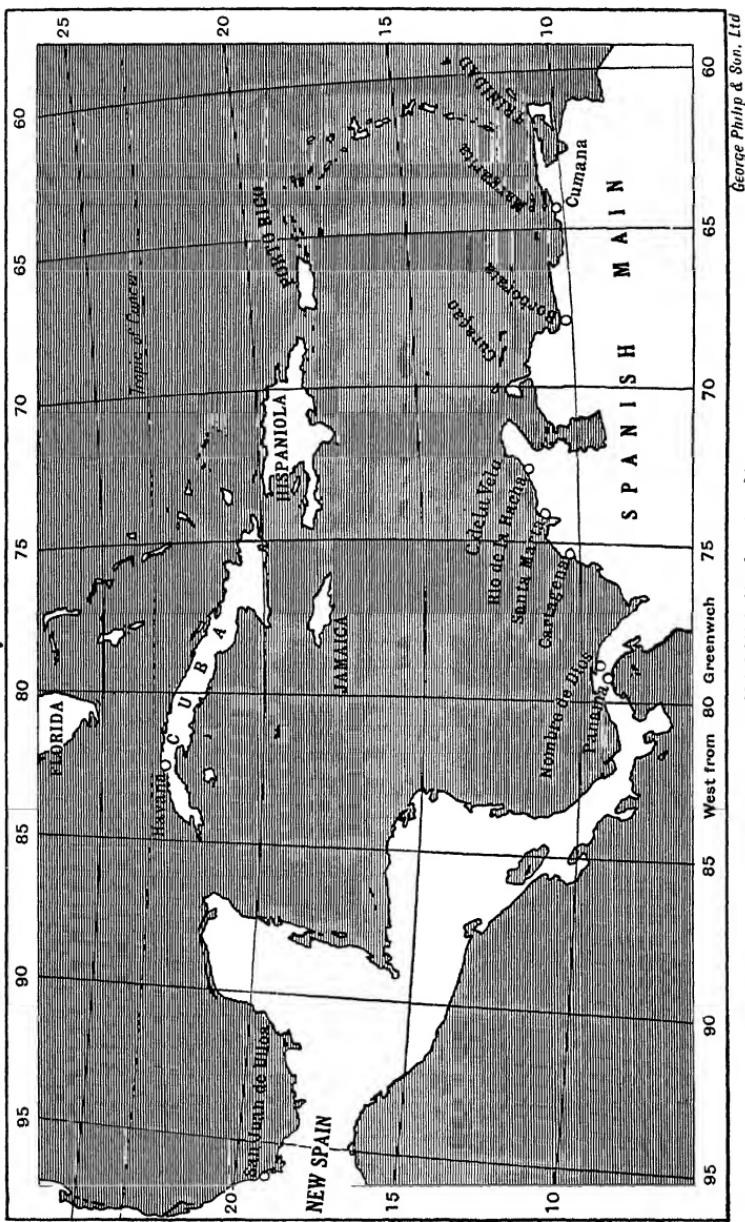


BOUT the first voyage we know only a portion, but the success and failure of it were destined to play an important part not only in the future life of Hawkins, but in the future relations between Spain and England.

John must many times have heard his father speak of the voyages to Guinea which he made in 1528 and again in 1530, when he bought goods which he carried to Brazil to sell and barter. During John's visits to Santa Cruz in the Canaries he had, as we know, heard stories of how, in the Spanish settlements in the West Indies, the Caribbee natives having become almost exterminated, negroes were in great demand to work in the mines and plantations.

Here then was an opening for trade very much to the taste of an adventurer. That the King of Spain had passed an emphatic edict forbidding his subjects in America to trade with foreigners under any circumstances whatever was not going to stand between Hawkins and his cherished scheme.

The friendly Spanish merchants had told Hawkins that once he arrived at a West Indian port he would have no difficulty in selling as many slaves as he could contrive to deliver alive. Also, in those days, America was a very long way from Madrid ; news took weeks to reach the West Indies from Spain, and much had to be left to the



## MAP OF THE SPANISH MAIN

discretion of the Governor of each settlement and to his manner of reading his instructions.

Eyes have been turned up in horror at the memory that one of England's greatest Naval heroes should have stained his hands in so unclean a thing as the slave trade ; but different times, different opinions.

In the sixteenth century slavery was still considered a normal branch of trade, and was not thought to be different from any other form of business. Nor was slave dealing by Europeans a new form of commercial enterprise. In 1441 Antam Gonsalves first brought home negroes from West Africa. In 1517 Charles V began to issue licences for the importation of African slaves in the West Indies. In fact, so respectable was the trade considered that the Church gave it her blessing.

Las Casas, who was the best friend the indigenous races of the West Indies ever had, encouraged the introduction of negro slaves in the belief that this was the only method by which the persecuted and rapidly dying American Indians could be preserved from extermination.

In 1551 the Spanish Government sold as many as 17,000 licences for slave importation from Africa to the West Indies. Indeed, so flourishing was the business that in 1553 Fernando Ochoa obtained a monopoly of the slave trade for seven years, under which he provided to import 23,000 negroes. Thus it was that, when Hawkins returned from Santa Cruz with his head full of the new enterprise, he had gone to London to lay his project before certain adventurers and financiers.

It was not easy to find men of substance who would back him in so risky a venture. Spain was still the great power, especially by sea, and to incur her wrath might bring about retribution with a heavy hand on the heads of the rash or unwary. Nevertheless he found the men he required, and a company was formed to finance an

expedition to trade in slaves, ivory and other merchandise between the Guinea coast and the West Indies.

Three ships were fitted out : the largest, commanded by Hawkins, was the "Solomon," a vessel of 120 tons ; next came the "Swallow," of 100 tons ; and lastly a small sloop of 40 tons, the "Jonas." The entire crews of the three vessels numbered about 100 souls.

This modest fleet sailed from Plymouth in October, 1562, and called at the Canaries, where Hawkins was warmly received and entertained by his old friends.

Sailing to Sierra Leone they gathered together some 300 negroes, who were somehow stowed away in the three vessels. Some of these slaves were secured by more or less honest barter ; others were captured by less honest stealth, or even by force, here and there along the Guinea coast.

Setting sail with this human freight, a successful voyage was made to San Domingo, or Hispaniola as it was then called. Sending word to the Spanish Governor of Port Isabella, Hawkins gave out that he was undertaking a voyage of discovery, and had been driven out of his course by bad weather, and was in need of food and water. This was afterwards his stock explanation to the Governors of the various American settlements he called at. It deceived no one, but was likely to look well in case any awkward questions were asked afterwards. He also happened to mention that he had on board his ship some English goods to sell as well as a very sound line in negro slaves.

The Spanish Governor must have found himself in somewhat of a dilemma. He was confronted with a proposition for which there was no precedent to guide him. Hitherto the badly-needed black labourers had been imported by licensed Spanish or Portuguese traders, who charged wickedly high prices for their goods. Here was a foreign heretic armed with charming and ingratiat-

ing manners, as well as guns, who offered negroes at a price much lower than usual.

After all, he could say to himself, the English, even if they were heretics, were, as far as he knew, a nation at peace with his own, and was not the Virgin Queen, about whom such scurrilous stories were told, sister-in-law to his own august sovereign King Philip?

Any qualms the Governor may have had about granting this polite English Captain the permission he desired were finally overcome by pressure from the planters, who were eager to buy the black cargo. After much argument leave was at last given, but the Governor did not know what duty should be charged a foreigner for each slave landed. In the end he allowed Hawkins to sell 200, but insisted that the other 100 should be left as deposit until he received instructions on the point from Madrid.

Hearing that there was a brisk demand in Spain for raw hides, which were procured in the wilder parts of Hispaniola by the forerunners of the future buccaneers, Hawkins invested part of his very handsome profits in buying a cargo of these and shipping them in two Spanish vessels that were on the point of sailing for Cadiz and Seville. To watch over his interests and to transact the business of selling the hides in Spain, he sent with the same ships Captain Thomas Hampton, who took with him a testimonial from the Governor for the good conduct of Hawkins and his crews during their sojourn at Port Isabella. All this shows that Hawkins had dealt in perfect good faith, and did not appreciate how angry the King of Spain would be at this flagrant piece of interloping trade. Hawkins, having seen his cargoes off on their journey to Spain, sailed home with his little fleet to Plymouth, arriving there safely in September, 1563. A few days later he received a rude shock.

He met in Plymouth the very man whom he had sent to Spain with his hides. Then for the first time he heard

what had happened. It appeared that the Spanish authorities had looked upon his transactions in the West Indies in a very unfriendly light, that the Inquisition had seized his cargo and sent an express message to the complacent Governor of San Domingo ordering him to forfeit the 100 slaves which had been left there on deposit. Also the officers of the Inquisition had attempted to seize Hampton, who, however, had warning and escaped just in time. Hawkins was astounded at this news, and wrote to the King of Spain imploring him to return his property. This letter having no result, he swore vengeance if his property was not returned to him ; but again with no better result.

This bold venture of the English merchant into the hitherto close preserve of Spain in the West Indies had stirred the Spanish Government to a profound degree, and orders were sent out to the various Governors to shut all ports absolutely in the future to all foreigners. King Philip himself warned Sir Thomas Challoner, the English Ambassador at the Spanish Court, that trouble would follow if any Englishman attempted another such outrage as had Hawkins. Pressure, too, was brought to bear on Elizabeth by the Ambassador as well as by the Secretary of State Sir William Cecil to forbid such doings by her subjects.

Such pressure seems to have had but little effect on the Queen, who had always a soft place in her heart for men of action and deeds of daring ; still more so when they brought much-needed wealth to the country and to her own pocket. Not least of all was the fact that, by his voyage, Hawkins had shown only too clearly where the weak joint was to be found in the armour of the Spanish colossus. From America came her vast wealth, and in America she was practically defenceless.

Although Hawkins' first long voyage was not a financial failure, it was disappointing ; but, as Froude

truly remarks, he “had opened the road to the West Indies.”

The English merchant wrangled with the Spanish King for the return of his hides, and even talked of going to Madrid to see what he could do about it on the spot. From doing this he was strongly discouraged by Chal-loner, whose sympathies were all with Spain ; indeed, he was half a Spaniard himself. In July, 1564, the Am-bassador wrote to Hawkins to suggest that his only chance of redress would be to give some four or five thousand ducats to some favourite of King Philip’s who could use his influence at Court. To this suggestion he refused to listen. Hawkins was now determined on taking action ; but he was never known to undertake any enterprise without careful preparation and foresight.

He recognized that his next voyage would need stronger support than any city company could offer, so he determined to enlist the patronage of the Queen. To do this he hired the Royal ship, the famous “Jesus of Lubeck.” This transaction was all to the Queen’s liking, for it cost her nothing ; she risked nothing, but stood a good chance to reap a very handsome profit.

A new company was formed, and to show how little she heeded the warnings of her Ambassador, the Queen herself became a shareholder in the syndicate. It was not her habit to advance actual money in such enterprises, but she lent the “Jesus of Lubeck” a vessel of 700 tons, and for this was allotted a handsome percentage of any profits that might accrue from the voyage. Following their sovereign’s example, several of the highest in the land took shares : such as Lord Pembroke, Lord Robert Dudley, and other members of the Council.

Great parade was made in the formal instructions given to Hawkins on his setting out, that no wrong was to be done to the King of Spain or to any subject of his. This sounded well and meant just whatever Hawkins liked, or

just nothing at all. Everything being complete, and 100 soldiers on board for this peaceful trading venture, Hawkins sailed from Plymouth on 18th October, 1564, two years after his last cruise.

Having gained experience by his first Atlantic voyage, John Hawkins made careful and thorough preparations for the second voyage, which was to be on a more ambitious scale than the previous one.

His fleet consisted of four ships. For his flagship he chose the old "Jesus of Lubeck," which carried a crew of about 80 men, and several years before had been condemned as not being worth repair. A foreign-built ship, she had originally been purchased by Henry VIII, in 1545, from the Hanseatic League.

The other three ships belonged to the Hawkins firm. They were the "Solomon," of 120 tons, with a crew of 35, the flagship of the previous voyage ; the "Tiger," 50 tons, an armed ship which had been a privateer and was manned by 20 men ; and a small vessel of 30 tons, the "Swallow," which carried a crew of only 15 men.

The total personnel was increased by the addition of several gentlemen-adventurers and their servants.

Hawkins was ever careful and thorough about the victualling of his ships : an important detail which most navigators of his time were apt to consider a secondary matter. Even so experienced a navigator as Francis Drake would start on a long ocean voyage quite inadequately provided with victuals for his crews. The staple food was biscuit, of which twenty-five thousand-weight was carried ; in addition to this quantities of meal, beans and dried peas were provided. Forty hogsheads of beef and 80 flitches of bacon supplied the meat. For fish they had 6 lasts of stock fish, and large quantities of ling.

Since no English sailor or soldier would do his duty without beer, 40 tuns of this national beverage were taken, and, as so large a proportion of the crews were Devon



THE "JESUS OF LUBECK"

*From Anthony's Roll at Magdalene College, Cambridge*

men, 35 tuns of cider were added. The 40 butts of malmsey, at £6 a butt, were no doubt for the cabin.

The only food provided for the negroes they hoped to get was beans and peas. This vegetarian diet, washed down with water, was to be their simple fare.

Oddly enough, for these same negroes there were supplied not only shirts but shoes.

Of the officers of the fleet John Hawkins was Commander-in-Chief or "General," and sailed in the "Jesus." Captain Field commanded the "Solomon," while Thomas Hampton, who served in the first voyage, sailed again.

Amongst the gentlemen-adventurers were John Chester, a son of Sir William Chester, one of the shareholders, George Fitzwilliam, Thomas Woorley, Edward Lacie, Anthony Parkhurst and John Sparke.

The last, who served as an officer on board the "Jesus," wrote the story of the voyage, which is to be found in Hakluyt's *English Voyages*. He belonged to Plymouth and afterwards became Mayor of the town.

The fleet sailed from Plymouth on October 18th, but an unfortunate accident took place as they were leaving the harbour, when a pulley broke and killed one of the officers, "being a sorrowful beginning to them all," as John Sparke truly observed in his journal.

With a fair wind the fleet sailed towards the Canary Islands until the 21st, when they ran into a north-easterly gale which separated and broke up the party.

After battling for two days against head winds, the fleet put into the harbour of Ferrol in Spain, where they remained for five days. During their stay the "Minion" and the "John Baptist," two London ships, came in, on their way to trade for gold on the Guinea coast. They agreed to join Hawkins' fleet and sail under his command.

Before leaving Ferrol Hawkins issued his sailing orders to his officers, giving the various signals to be used between the ships by night and day, and ending up with the

famous “ Serve God daily ! love one another ! preserve your victuals ! beware of fire ! and keep good company ! ” the last instruction meaning, of course, that the ships should keep in touch with one another.

On the 30th, profiting by a favourable wind, Hawkins gave the signal for his fleet to weigh, and on November 4th they sighted the island of Madeira, and two days later Tenerife, which they mistook for Grand Canary. In fact, for the next two days they were lost, sailing hither and thither, from one island to another, searching for Tenerife. At last they found it, and Hawkins, not waiting until the anchor was dropped, rowed ashore in the pinnace with a letter for his friend the Governor, Pedro de Ponte. But as he approached the landing-place he met with an unlooked-for reception, for “ suddenly there appeared upon two points of the road, men levelling their bases and harquebusses to them, with divers others with halberds, pikes, swords and targets, to the number of four score, which happened so contrary to his expectation, that it did greatly amaze him.”

However, on shouting out that he was Juan Achines, and an old friend of Pedro de Ponte, Nicholas, one of the Governor’s sons, stepped forward and recognized Hawkins and all was well.

The Governor was sent for, from Santa Cruz, a town sixty miles away, and in the meanwhile the ships’ crews were busy refreshing themselves and making repairs to the ships. When the Governor arrived he was pleased to see his English friend and “ gave him as gentle entertainment, as if he had been his own brother.”

Evidently the crews enjoyed their stay at this hospitable island, for John Sparke breaks off his narrative to enlarge, with great smacking of lips, on the good wine they drank, and the fat raisins, and the delicious suckets or sweetmeats they ate. Sparke, who noted many things in his journal, always found space for descriptions of any

objects of natural history that caught his eye. Here for the first time he met with the camel, about which he finds much to set down. He reports this useful quadruped to be "of understanding very good, but of shape very deformed ; with a little belly ; long misshapen legs ; and feet very broad of flesh, without a hoof, all whole saving the great toe ; a back bearing up like a molehill, a large and thin neck, with a little head, with a bunch of hard flesh, which Nature hath given him in his breast to lean upon. This beast liveth hardly, and is contented with straw and stubble ; but of strong force being well able to carry five hundred weight." Let us not smile in our superior knowledge at this Elizabethan naturalist ; for his sketch gives a curiously good likeness of the uncouth beast.

Sparke has a good deal to say concerning certain strange trees which he heard about, which continually dropped water from their leaves in such quantities as to supply both man and beast. He is mystified by accounts of certain "flitting islands" which, when men approached them, vanished, and "it should seem he is not yet born, to whom God hath appointed the finding of them."

All very mysterious and rather frightening, when recounted and discussed at night in the fo'c'sle.

On November 15th they departed from these delectable islands and sailed for the Guinea coast. When five days out from Tenerife, an incident happened which shows how capable a navigator Hawkins must have been. A brisk breeze was blowing when a pinnace which was sailing alongside the "Jesus" capsized. By the time the ship could be put about, the pinnace was a long way out of sight. Nevertheless Hawkins had a longboat launched and manned by 24 of the strongest rowers in the ship, and himself directed the course they should take, having marked by the sun the exact spot where the accident occurred. To the surprise and joy of all on

board, the upturned pinnace was found with the two occupants perched on the keel, and both men and pinnace were saved.

A few days later they touched at Cape Blanco and Cape Verde on the African coast, but found to their annoyance that the "Minion" and "John Baptist" had fore-stalled them, having surprised and taken some natives for slaves ; the rest were very shy indeed and were not to be caught again, and all Hawkins brought away was a ship-wrecked Frenchman who had lived for a long while alone with the blacks. Leaving this unprofitable neighbourhood, they called next at the uninhabited island of Alcantraz ; at least, uninhabited except for innumerable sea-birds. A neighbouring island, La Forinso, was found to be inhabited, and 80 well-armed men were landed, who pursued several parties of negroes. The natives showed fight, and were apparently quite innocent on the subject of fire-arms ; for they showed no fear whatever of the invaders' arquebuses, until one of the negroes was shot by a ball in the thigh, when they all ran away.

So far things were not going at all well : an odd negro had been picked up here and there, but that was all. Arriving next at the island of Sambula, things began to look better. Here they found well-arranged villages surrounded by carefully tended fields, tilled by a native race called the Sapiés, who were the slaves of a tribe of cannibals which Sparke calls the "Sanboes," from which it has been suggested comes the name "Samboes" of later days. These Sapiés, he records, showed no fear, though why indeed should they, for to be permanently in the unremunerated employment of a cannibal cannot stimulate to much display of heroism, and although "they fled incontinently" before the English sailors, Hawkins bagged quite a satisfactory number ; so the Sapiés found themselves the property of new masters. A large quantity of rice, fruit and mill was taken on board

as food for the slaves, and on December 21st they left with the loss of but one man of the crews, who was killed while going alone in search of a feed of "pompions," getting his throat cut for his greediness by some natives.

A day's sail brought them on December 22nd to the mouth of the Callowsa river. Here an expedition was made, the two larger vessels being left at anchor in the estuary to serve as a base for the boats, while Hawkins himself continued some way up the river. The result of this expedition was satisfactory, ending in the acquisition of "two caravels laden with negroes." So far all had gone well, but a reverse of fortune was in store.

Hawkins had been assured by the Portuguese factors on the coast that the neighbouring town of Bymba was well worth his attention, being rich in stores of gold and in potential slaves which merely waited to be gathered up.

For once in his life Hawkins was careless and underestimated his opponents, for he took only a small force of forty men, in armour, guided by a Portuguese, to attack the town. Unfortunately the stories of the gold hidden in Bymba had demoralized Hawkins' soldiers, for when the town was entered the men wandered off in small parties of twos and threes and began searching the native huts for plunder. Hawkins himself, with a dozen men, had marched right through the town to look for slaves, and on returning found that his insubordinate men were in full flight before some 200 armed natives, and it was only Hawkins' coolness that saved them from utter disaster. As it was, he was fortunate to get away at all, with a casualty list of seven killed and twenty-seven wounded. Amongst the killed was Captain Field of the "Solomon." This was a heavy price to pay for the ten slaves they managed to bring away; although it is difficult to imagine how, in their flight before a mob of howling savages, they succeeded, with only thirteen sound men, in getting away with so many of their own wounded.

as well as ten native prisoners. Sparke gives in a sentence a sketch of Hawkins which is worth while quoting, as it provides a clear picture of our hero in a tight place.

The English sailors were in full flight, trying to reach their boats, and the situation was as desperate as it could be, but "the Captain in a singular wise manner carried himself, with countenance very cheerful outwardly, as though he did little weigh the death of his men, nor yet the hurt of the rest, although his heart inwardly was broken in pieces for it."

Trade so far had not been very brisk, so the fleet sailed to try their fortune at Taggarin, where the two smaller ships, the "Tiger" and the "Swallow," accompanied by their boats, said good-bye to the "Jesus" and "Solomon" and went negro-hunting up the river Casseroes. This expedition was successful; a large enough bag of negroes was caught or "trafficked" to make the long voyage across the South Atlantic worth while. Hawkins wanted to stop on the Sierra Leone coast a while longer to catch a few more natives, but his crews were becoming seriously reduced by sickness, so he decided to get away while he still had enough sailors left to work the ships.

This was all the more exasperating for Hawkins as news had been brought that a battle was about to be fought between the tribes of Sierra Leone and Taggarin and, had he been able to await the result of this contest, the victor would have sold him the vanquished at, no doubt, bargain prices. So on the night of January 29th, 1565, they set sail from Sierra Leone for the Indies, thus missing by a few hours what might very well have proved a calamity; for it was learned later on that the King of Sierra Leone had planned an ambush the following night, with the object of seeing "what kind of people we were," and would probably have caught the English crews busily engaged in filling the water-casks.

But, as Sparke, the virtuous chronicler, points out,

“ God, who worketh all things for the best, would not have it so, and by Him we escaped without danger, his name be praysed for it,” which shows that if in the sixteenth century you were bent on catching Africans to sell for slaves, if your conscience was clear you might rest assured that Providence would watch over you.

During the first month crossing the Atlantic they met with dead calms ; and their small, ill-ventilated ships, crowded with sweating negroes, soldiers and sailors, must have resembled floating Newgate prisons as they lay for eighteen sweltering days on the glassy South Atlantic ocean, with their drinking-water growing less and less, while each day more men went sick or died. But again “ Almighty God, who never suffereth His elect to perish,” looked after them during the great calm and “ sent us the ordinary Brise, which is the Northwest winde, which never left us till wee came to an Island of the Canybals, called Dominica.”

It was on Saturday, March 9th, that they arrived, but they only stopped there long enough to obtain water for the slaves, who were already dying of thirst. Water proved to be scarce at Hispaniola and took long to collect, but this was compensated for by the total absence of “ Canybals,” much to the relief of the adventurers, who had become alarmed by the stories they had heard of the dire catastrophes that had happened to other crews visiting Dominica, particularly how one entire crew had been killed and eaten up, and of the horrid things that had happened to the crew of the “ Green Dragon ” of Newhaven.

Hurrying from these inhospitable shores, they sailed south-east, calling five days later at the Testigos Islands, a small group off the coast of Venezuela, and next day arrived at Margarita Island. Here “ wee were entertained by the Alcalde, and had both Beeves and sheepe given us, for the refreshing of our men ” : but with the

Governor of the island it was quite another story. This important official refused to meet Hawkins and was equally emphatic in refusing to grant him a licence to trade. Evidently the Governor had read and carefully digested his orders from Madrid, for he declined to permit the Spanish pilot, whom Hawkins had just hired, to leave Margarita, and he sent a special messenger by a fast boat to San Domingo to warn the Viceroy of the arrival of the Arch-Pirate "Achines" on the Spanish Main. This conscientious Governor next ordered all the inhabitants, both Spanish and Indians, to evacuate the town and hide in the woods, with all their valuables. After wasting four days Hawkins decided that as nothing was to be gained here by force he had better try elsewhere; so he weighed and sailed to another small settlement on the Spanish Main, Cumana by name, to try his fortune there. On arrival, the "General" went ashore in his pinnace, and conversed with some Spaniards on the beach, hoping to do a little business in "black ivory." The Commander of the small garrison told Hawkins that they had only recently arrived from Spain and assured him that they had not, amongst them all, the wherewithal to invest in one solitary negro: but they were very glad to recommend to the English Admiral a particularly good watering-place, at a spot just a few miles further along the coast, called Santa Fé.

The Indians at Santa Fé proved friendly, bringing down various things good to eat, particularly maize cakes and potatoes; both of which were new to the travellers. In exchange various trifles were given, such as beads, knives and pewter whistles. We wonder if any of those pewter whistles still exist in some out-of-the-way corner of the Spanish Main. "These potatoes," our chronicler writes, "be the most delicate roots that may be eaten, and do far exceed our parsnips and carrots."

Leaving Santa Fé on March 28th, they sailed between

the mainland and low-lying Tortuga, or Turtle Island, and proceeded to coast along until April 1st, when Hawkins left the "Jesus" to sail close inshore in his pinnace, stopping here and there to converse with the Caribs, many of whom came off to him in their canoes. These natives appeared to be very friendly and anxious for Hawkins to come on shore, which he would have done had he not exhausted his supply of trinkets. As he learned later on, this was just as well, for these Caribs were not as friendly as the Indians at Santa Fé, but were notorious for being cannibals and users of poisoned arrows. Indeed, so skilful were they with their bows and arrows that the Spaniards, when travelling with horses in their territories, used to envelop their mounts in armour made of quilted cotton two inches thick, with only the eye of the horse unprotected ; yet such good shots were the Indians that it was no uncommon thing for them to shoot a poisoned arrow through the small opening in the armour into the animal's eye.

After coasting along for some days they arrived on the 3rd of April at the town of Borburata, which was near the modern Puerto Cabello on the Venezuelan coast.

As soon as the ships were anchored outside the harbour, Captain Hawkins rowed ashore, where he introduced himself to the assembled Spaniards as "an Englishman, come thither to trade with them by the way of merchandize," and demanding a licence to do so. This abrupt request opened up a long discussion. On the one side the Spaniards said they dared not disobey their sovereign's definite injunction forbidding his subjects in the West Indies to traffic with foreigners, for to do so would make them liable to forfeit all their belongings, and might possibly involve them in worse dilemmas, and "they desired him not to molest them any further, but to depart as he came." This answer Hawkins was quite prepared for, and he proceeded to bring forward his second line of argu-

ment. He replied that necessity compelled him to trade. Was he not in command of one of the Queen's Armadas of England, and had he not many souls on board, soldiers and sailors, who required food and drink, yes and money also, without which it was out of the question to think of his departure? At the same time they must not think he was threatening them, the subjects of a friendly power, with violence. Far from it; he would do nothing which might bring dishonour on his own Sovereign lady, nor on his own good name and reputation, "unless," as he hinted darkly, "he were too rigorously dealt withall." This would be doubly a pity, he added, since honest and friendly trade between them would be to the mutual benefit of both sides and do no harm to anybody. Lastly, he pointed out, if Englishmen had free right to trade in the Spanish ports in Spain and Flanders, what harm could there be in his carrying on trade in any other of King Philip's domains? The Spaniards were now in a pretty fix. They were longing to buy Hawkins' slaves, for the native Caribs would not work for them, and they badly needed labour. Here was a chance, at their very doors, to get cheaply what they most sorely needed. Yet there were those wretched orders come express from the King; reinforced by the Viceroy; forbidding any kind of traffic with foreigners; and of all foreigners, with this very Captain Hawkins. There was one slight hope. They themselves dare not, indeed could not, grant a licence to trade, but the Governor, who was just then at a place sixty leagues away, should be appealed to and the onus put on his shoulders. A speedy messenger would be despatched at once and ought to return with the Governor's answer in the space of ten days.

The Governors of these Spanish settlements must have found it extremely difficult to obey the King's strict injunctions against trading with foreign armed merchants.

In a long report addressed to His Majesty, on April

21st, 1568, by the accountant of Venezuela, full of complaints about the visits to Borburata by the English and French, he says :

“ These corsairs come fully supplied with all lines of merchandise, oils and wines and everything else which is lacking in the country. The colonists’ needs are great, and neither penalties nor punishments suffice to prevent them from buying secretly what they want. As a matter of fact, they make their purchases, but nothing can be learned of them, and no measures suffice to prevent it.”

The root of the whole trouble was that the Spanish Government almost entirely neglected the smaller or more distant settlements, scarcely ever sending out a ship except to the larger ports, such as Nombre de Dios or Havana.

In the meantime they saw no harm in allowing the English ships to come and anchor safely and snugly in the harbour : where they could sell and deliver any victuals that might be needed and paid for ! One day proved sufficient time in which to get on board all the provisions and stores required ; and, as idleness was always abhorrent to Hawkins, he soon began to chafe at the thought that his men would for many days be eating their heads off, and consuming wages, waiting for the Governor’s answer, which, when it did arrive, would most likely forbid trade.

So the haggling went on, the Spaniards trying to get the much-needed slaves at a low price, while Hawkins threatened to take his goods elsewhere if they did not soon offer a reasonable one. Matters seemed to have reached a deadlock, when Hawkins had the brilliant idea of offering a special line of “ lean and sick negroes ” at greatly reduced prices. This, as he pointed out to his customers, was a chance not to be missed, and one which was unlikely ever to occur again. These slaves, now in poor condition, had only to spend a few days on shore to regain their

strength and health, and would soon double or treble their value, while if he kept them much longer between his crowded decks, in heat and in want of proper provisions, they would die. Why not sell these for the benefit of all concerned? This offer was put in writing and the matter discussed by a Committee of the Officers and Townsmen of Borburata, who decided to allow thirty of the leanest negroes to be landed, and sold to the poorer Spaniards. Even then a new difficulty arose. Although plenty of would-be purchasers were ready to buy the slaves, they had no money to pay for them. The reason for this was that, on the first arrival of the English fleet, every Spaniard, mistaking them for French pirates, had packed up his portable valuables and money, and sent them to be hidden in the mountains until all danger had passed.

Nevertheless the next day certain merchants and planters came down to the beach and began to bargain with Hawkins, declaring that the price he was demanding for his slaves was much too high.

But Hawkins was too old a bird at the game to be bluffed. He saw well enough that the Spaniards were itching to buy his slaves, so he employed the device of pretending to make preparations for departing. He told them that he not only wanted a licence to sell but he required a profit also, and that they denied him both. After much bickering and haggling on both sides, some of the poorer planters bought Hawkins' "lean" negroes for small sums, this bartering going on until April 4th, when the Governor himself appeared upon the scene. This was the Licentiate Alonso Bernaldez, Governor of Venezuela and Commissioner of the Audiencia at San Domingo, a most important official.

He and Hawkins met, and the Admiral told his tale of imaginary woes, which he afterwards used so often with success. This was to explain his presence by a story of

storms and stress of weather, which had thrown him out of his intended course ; with the result he was compelled to beg leave to stop a while to repair his ships and rigging and to buy victuals. This story was not for a moment expected to deceive the Spanish Governor, nor did it, but it made an excellent excuse for the Governor to give to the Authorities at home in Spain if at any time trouble should threaten from his friendly reception of the foreign fleet. To further the effect of the story, Hawkins reminded the Governor of the amicable relations that happily existed between the King of Spain and the Queen of England.

The original petition, written on April 16th, 1565, by Hawkins and addressed to the Licentiate Alonso Bernaldez, at Borburata, still exists in the archives of the Indies at Seville, and opens with these words :

“ Very magnificent sir :

“ I, John Hawkins, captain general of my fleet, in the person of Cristobal de Llerena, my procurator, appear before your honour in the manner most advantageous to my interests and state that ”—and then followed the usual story of adverse winds, shortage of victuals and need for supplies.

The Governor, after due deliberation with his Council, agreed to grant Hawkins the much-desired licence to trade. But even now fresh difficulties arose. The law fixed the maximum price of a slave at the sum of 100 ducats, but the Governor demanded a duty of 30 ducats on every slave that changed hands, and this duty had to be paid by the vendor. Since the legal duty was but  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., the sorely tried Hawkins, now that he had the precious licence safely locked up in his chest, could afford to be the man of action and no longer the huckster. Without more ado he landed at the head of one hundred men “ well armed with bowes, arrowes, harquebuzes and pikes,” and led them towards the town.

Messengers came hurrying down from the Governor requesting the Captain to hold his hand a little longer, but the Captain, having no need any longer to keep up the polite diplomatic style, bluntly demanded that the duty on his slaves should be the  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. and not a penny more, or else "he would displease them."

What form the Captain's displeasure would take the Governor did not wait to inquire, but immediately granted permission for trade to commence, and soon the largest part of the slaves was landed and disposed of to everybody's satisfaction.

It will be interesting to compare Hawkins' description with the official account of the licence to trade sent by the Governor to Spain. It presents us with a picture of the scene from the Spanish point of view. The letter is itself too long to print here in full, but a few extracts will suffice to show how harried the unfortunate Governor was by his self-willed and self-invited guest :

"Whereas after the said licence had been issued and the English captain notified the whole town felt somewhat safer than it had theretofore, because of the satisfaction the English captain evinced in possessing the licence, giving us to understand that in exchange for it he promised us all peace since his desire had been met in that the door was opened for business." To collect the customs duties which were claimed by the King, the Governor sent down to the beach his accountant and Treasurer's lieutenant. "When they had arrived there the captain came off in a small boat, and when he had come near to land, spoke with the said officials who say that during this conversation the captain became angry and tore up the licence to sell, which had been given him, and withdrew and ordered a heavy piece of ordnance fired with which he announced war, and the said officials returned at once to report the commencement of hostilities."

The poor harassed Governor foresaw that, if he did not handle this impossible foreigner with great care, he would have him and his wild crews pillaging his town, so he quickly "sent to entreat the captain to recover himself and not to be angered nor land men, for his honour was continuing his efforts to meet his desires." While this conciliatory message was on its way to Hawkins, the lookout, stationed on a neighbouring hill, signalled that the English were landing in force and marching on the town. At the same moment the messenger returned in great haste to report that "the captain said he was being played with and the object was to get possession of his goods for nothing for the said officials had demanded of him 30 ducats for slave licence and 7½ per cent. customs duties on each negro sold, whereas he owed only the 7½ per cent. and would pay no more," adding that a licence for these his own terms should be sent down to him immediately on the road, as otherwise it would be too late as his men would refuse to be held back from pillaging the town.

The Governor, by now thoroughly alarmed, sent back the messenger to tell Hawkins that everything should be done as he wished, "and that his honour would advise him of it presently," after he had consulted with his staff. To this the English Captain, whose patience was exhausted, returned a peremptory reply "that he wanted fewer messengers and for not a man to return thither except with the licence of his terms, for he would kill any other."

The frantic Governor immediately agreed to grant everything Hawkins demanded, and once again Agustin de Ancona, the messenger, who must have been exhausted running post-haste between the two parties in the hot tropic sun, was sent back to Hawkins to tell him so. And only just in time, "for the main body of troops was very near, the flag in sight, and the weapons and the drum

beating, and the men also were seen marching all in good order, who seemed in number to be as many as three hundred soldiers." Quickly a licence was drawn up and sent by an official on horseback to Hawkins as he marched at the head of his troops.

A halt was called, while Hawkins took and read the licence aloud to his men, who gave a cheer, and fired a salvo with their muskets "as a signal of peace."

On April 29th, just as Hawkins was preparing to leave Borburata, a French ship, the "Green Dragon" of Havre, commanded by the famous French corsair Captain Bontemps, arrived with the sad news that their old consort the "Minion" had been attacked by several Portuguese ships on the West African coast, and the Captain, Carlet, and a dozen of his men taken prisoners. The night before the English left Borburata, a surprise attack was made by the native Carib Indians, who approached the town in their canoes under cover of darkness with the intention of plundering the town. Usually the Spaniards were very negligent in guarding their settlements unless danger was threatened, but on this occasion, owing to the presence of so many foreign ships, all were on the alert, even the horses being ready saddled night and day, showing how little the Spaniards really trusted the English. Thus the Indians themselves were surprised and fled at the first charge of the Spanish horsemen, the leader of the Indians being captured alive and put to death in the most revolting way.

Sailing on May 4th, the fleet arrived two days later at the island of Curaçao, where a cargo of hides was procured. A few head of cattle had been let loose some years previously, and by now the whole island was little else than one large cattle-ranch. Only the hides were used, the carcass being left to rot, with the exception of the tongue, which was all the inhabitants considered worth eating.

The crew had a wonderful time here, in the way of food, which must have been a pleasant change after the usual sea fare. In fact, according to Sparke, "in this place we had *trafique* for hides and found great refreshing both of beef, mutton and lambs, whereof there was such plenty . . . we had the flesh given us for nothing, the plenty whereof was so abundant, that the worst in the ship thought scorne not only of mutton, but also of sodden lamb, which they disdained to eat unrusted."

Having invested most of the money made by the sale of his slaves at Borburata in hides, Hawkins left Curaçao on May 15th, making for the Main, where he took to his pinnace, as he was accustomed to, coasting along close in-shore while the ship sailed further out. Passing close by Cabo de la Vela they arrived on the morning of the 19th off Rio de la Hacha. Hawkins at once went ashore to "have talke with the kings treasurer of the Indies resident there."

This took the usual form of a story of adverse winds which had driven him out of his course ; with a good deal of plausible embroidery about the amicable relations existing between the rulers of England and Spain. But on this occasion the story fell flat, for, as Hawkins learned later, a fast caravel had been sent from Margarita to warn the Viceroy at San Domingo that the notorious "Achines" was again on the coast. On this account special express orders had been despatched to all the neighbouring settlements, forbidding the King's subjects to have any dealings whatever with the English interloper, and threatening that "if they did, they should lose all that they did *trafique* for, besides their bodies at the magistrates commandment."

In spite of this the Governor of La Hacha gave out a broad hint that, if Hawkins cared to reduce the price of his slaves by one half, it was more than likely that business would result, adding that if this suggestion did not suit

Hawkins, he was quite at liberty to go elsewhere with his goods, "for they were determined not to deal otherwise with him." Finding that argument was of no further use, Hawkins went aboard the "Jesus" and wrote a stiff letter to the Governor, complaining that he was being treated unreasonably, and ending up with a thinly veiled threat that "they dealt too rigorously with him, to go about to cut his throat in the price of his commodities . . . but seeing they had sent him this to his supper, he would in the morning bring them as good a breakfast."

Hawkins' breakfast party to the Treasurer and citizens of Rio de la Hacha was announced early next morning, not by sound of gong but by the firing of a battery of well-loaded cannon.

Having thus awakened and summoned the guests to the feast, the Admiral landed one hundred soldiers, all in full armour and armed to the teeth. The "great boat" in which rowed Hawkins was armed with "two falcons of brass," while the other boats carried "double bases in their noses which being perceived by the townsmen, they incontinent in battall aray with their drumme and ensigne displayed, marched from the Town to the sands, of footmen to the number of an hundred and fifty, making great bragges with their cries." The Captain met this counter-demonstration by the discharge of a couple of guns, and at each shot the enemy fell flat on their stomachs, only to pick themselves up and scuttle away, leaving in their haste their "ensigne." The Spanish infantry having failed so despicably, the cavalry then appeared on the battlefield, thirty horsemen in all, who "made as brave a shew as might be, coursing up and downe with their horses, their brave white leather Targets in one hand, and their jewelings in the other, as though they would have received us at our landing." But, alas for the martial spirit of the army of Rio de la Hacha, the moment the English landed on the beach, the horsemen retreated and

began to consult with each other as to what they had better do next with these embarrassing invaders, who would not be bluffed by their brave showing.

In the meantime Hawkins marshalled his men on the beach and proceeded to lead them to the attack. The horsemen retreated, while one advanced with a message to say that "the Treasurer marveiled what he meant to do to come ashore in that order." Hawkins, knowing by now who he had to deal with, marched steadily forward, when another messenger arrived in hot haste, begging Hawkins to stay his soldiers, and the Treasurer would come and speak with him. This was agreed to, and Hawkins walked ahead alone in armour, but with no weapon. The Treasurer on the contrary came mounted and armed with his javelin. Matters were soon settled between the two leaders, and licence was given for Hawkins to sell his slaves at his own price.

While the traffic was going on, the crews were kept busily employed in getting water from the mouth of the river, and Sparke, the narrator, after discoursing on the natural history of the crocodiles which infested the river, makes the following interesting observation : "His nature is ever when he would have his prey; to cry and sobbe like a Christian body, to provoke them to come to him, and then hee snatcheth at them, and thereupon came this proverbe that is applied to women when they weep, *Lachrymae Crocodili*, the meaning whereof is, that as the Crocodile when he crieth goeth then about most to deceive, so doth a woman most commonly when she weepeth."

Soon the last slave was sold and paid for and the last of the water-butts filled, and all ready for their departure, when there came a whisper of treachery. Hawkins was making a final effort to induce the Treasurer to pay a debt incurred by the Governor of Borburata for some of the

slaves bought there, when news was brought to him that a Captain and a file of soldiers had been seen entering the town from some neighbouring settlement.

Immediately Hawkins broke off all further negotiations and went aboard his ships. Next morning he landed for the last time with his crews fully armed to say a farewell to the Treasurer.

After receiving the following testimonial of his good behaviour while at Rio de la Hacha, Hawkins saluted the Treasurer with a salvo and departed :

“I, Hernando de Heredia, notary public and clerk of the council in this city of Rio de la Hacha on the mainland coast in the Indies in the Ocean Sea, do hereby certify to all whom it may concern, that from Saturday in the morning, which was the nineteenth day of the present month of May, when the very magnificent John Hawkins, captain general of the English fleet, entered with the said fleet into the harbour of this city, up to today, Wednesday, at about four o’clock in the afternoon, when he got under weigh with said fleet, the said captain and the men of his fleet have traded and transacted business with all the people of this town in the slaves and merchandise which their vessels brought, maintaining the peace and without disturbing it, and working no harm to any person whatsoever of any quality or condition.

“In testimony whereof, at the request of the said John Hawkins, captain general of the said fleet, I issue this present certificate in Rio de la Hacha, Wednesday at about four o’clock in the afternoon on the thirtieth day of the present month of May in the year One thousand five hundred and sixty-five.

“And in conclusion I affixed here my usual sign in evidence of the truth.

“HERNANDO DE HEREDIA  
“Notary public and clerk of the Council.”

Hawkins had now sold all his slaves, at a handsome profit ; his holds were well stocked with raw hides and other merchandise, and he said farewell to the Spanish Main on May 31st, 1565, intending to lay out some of his treasure in more hides and sugar at Hispaniola.

His intention was to call at the western end of this island to make inquiries about some merchandise he had left there on the previous voyage.

Owing to their ignorance of the strong current that runs from east to west, the first land they sighted proved to be the middle of the island of Jamaica.

On board the "Jesus" was a Spanish merchant who was to act as pilot. This man, whose home was in Jamaica, had been captured by the natives in West Africa, and had been ransomed by Hawkins. He had agreed to guide his rescuers to a safe port in Jamaica, and was to be left there, to rejoin his wife and friends after an absence of three years. This unfortunate man was always thinking he recognized the various bays, mountains and other landfalls, but on going inshore to prospect it was always found that he was mistaken. The trade wind and current kept beating them to the east, and all along the coast they went, landing here and there to inquire of the inhabitants their exact whereabouts, and the way to the nearest harbour. But never once did they meet with an inhabitant, so deserted were these coasts, although it was seventy years since the Spaniards had begun to colonize Jamaica and Cuba.

On one occasion the Spanish merchant was so certain he recognized a place where he had friends living that, before entering the pinnace to go ashore, "he put on his new clothes, and for joy flung away his old" ; yet when the pinnace reached the shore it turned out not to be the place the merchant had expected, being quite without inhabitants, and the miserable merchant had to return to the ship and continue the voyage, wearing his best suit.

Still worse, although he had been in sight of Jamaica, had indeed once again trodden on its shores, he was compelled to return with his rescuers all the way to England. Whether he ever did get back to Jamaica is not known, but one sincerely hopes that he did, for surely no man ever experienced a more bitter disappointment than did that Spanish merchant when he returned to the "Jesus," all bedecked in his best clothes.

One gathers from Sparke's account that the Spaniard was the most unpopular person on board just at this time, and even the kindly Hawkins must have found little to like in a man who was the cause of his losing a two thousand pound profit in hides, which awaited him at one of the ports they missed.

All this muddling between Hispaniola, Jamaica and Cuba was in large part due to the policy of the Spaniards. They allowed as little information as possible to leak out about the geography, winds and currents of their El Dorado in the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico ; so that even so experienced and skilful a navigator as Hawkins was apt to lose his bearings unless he had a pilot on board who knew the islands intimately.

Coasting along the southern shore of Cuba they managed to overshoot the port of Santa Cruz, where Hawkins hoped to make good his loss at Jamaica. They watered at the Isle of Pines, doubled Cape San Antonio, the extreme western point of Cuba, and spent some days tacking to and fro, trying to make Havana. Here again they failed, and decided to give up the attempt. Instead they turned towards Florida and sailed slowly along the coast, keeping a sharp lookout in every one of the almost innumerable creeks for the French colony which was known to be somewhere thereabouts. It was not until August 3rd that they caught sight of a ship of about 80 tons and a couple of smaller vessels lying at anchor in the mouth of the river May. The officers on board these

vessels told Hawkins that their Chief, M. Laudonnière, was at a fort some six miles further up the stream. Hawkins went aboard one of his pinnaces and sailed up the river, and received an enthusiastic welcome from the French Governor and his handful of soldiers. There is little wonder at this : for, as Hawkins soon learnt, the French colony was on its last legs. Laudonnière had landed at the same spot some fourteen months before, in May 1564, at the head of a party of some two hundred men, mostly soldiers. The attempt at forming a colony had proved deplorable. They quarrelled with the native Floridans, and the men would do no kind of manual toil. After consuming the provisions they had brought with them from France, they subsisted on maize—bought, borrowed or begged from the Indians. They made no attempt to till the soil and sow any corn ; nor had they the intelligence or energy to catch the fish which swarmed in the river at their very feet. One catastrophe had followed another. Some months before Hawkins arrived, a serious mutiny had taken place, when some eighty of the soldiers rose against their Captain, disarmed him and threw him into prison. They then seized two vessels, with most of the food which remained to the colony, and sailed south to go a-pirating in the Caribbean Sea. For a time they did well, pillaging and plundering Spanish ships and settlements. Eventually they attacked and took two richly laden Spanish caravels, and such was their insolence by this time that they anchored in a harbour in Jamaica, going on shore each day as though they were honest mariners. “ But,” as the pious historian Sparke points out, “ God which would not suffer such evil doers unpunished, did indurate their hearts in such sort, that they lingered the time so long, that a ship and galleas being made out of Santo Domingo, came thither into the harbour, and took twenty of them, whereof the most part were hanged.”

Some five and twenty of these pirates managed to escape, and eventually made their way back to the river May, where their friends promptly imprisoned the lot and hanged four of the ringleaders.

By this time the natives were heartily tired of their unbidden white "guests," who everlastingly begged food but who had nothing left to offer in exchange. As begging began to fail, the French took by force what they needed, so that by the time Hawkins and his party arrived a state of siege was in progress and they were in the last stages of starvation and desperation, having only enough rations left to last them another ten days. As Sparke, the sailor, sagely remarks : "they were soldiers who expected to live by the sweat of other men's brows." In fact, the only two things even distantly approaching usefulness which these colonists had done during their stay were to make twenty hogshead of wine from the wild grapes that grew in profusion about the settlement, and to cultivate a taste for tobacco, the use of which they learnt from the Indians. It is probably from this visit that the first tobacco was introduced into Europe, or at any rate into England.

Sparke, who had an eye and a pen for anything new, states : "The Floridians when they travell, have a kinde of herbe dried, who with a cane and an earthen cup in the end, with fire, and the dried herbs put together, doe sucke through the cane the smoke thereof, which smoke satisfieth their hunger, and therewith they live foure or five dayes without meat or drinke, and this the Frenchmen used for this purpose : yet do they hold opinion withall, that it causeth water and phlegm to void from their stomachs."

Sparke has a great deal more to say about Florida and the Floridans ; and many observations on the natural history of the coast. Thus there were many lions, which lived at enmity with the unicorns, "for there is no beast,"

adds this sixteenth-century Waterton, “but hath his enemy, as the cony the polcat, a sheepe the woolf, the elephant the rinoceros.” Speaking of “verminous beasts,” such as the crocodile and adders, he “heard of a miracle of one of these adders, upon which a faulcon seizing, the sayd adder did claspe her tail about her ; which the French Captaine seeing, came to the rescue of the faulcon, and took her, slaying the adder ; and this faulcon being wilde, he did reclaim her, and kept her for the space of two months, at which time for very want of meat, he was fain to cast her off.”

Many a starving pioneer would have eaten his falcon rather than cast her off, and it is little acts of kindness like this that make the memory of M. René Laudonnière dear to us.

We get long and enchanting descriptions of the fishes and birds ; for example there is “the Flemengo, having all red feathers, and long legs like a herne” with a “bill whereon the upper neb hangeth an inch over the nether.” But we must resist the natural temptation to quote Sparke further, except to add that amongst the sea-fowl he “noted the pellicane which is fained to be the lovingst bird that is ; which rather than her young should want, will spare her heart bloud out of her belly : but for all this lovingness she is very deformed to behold ! ”

In the meantime Hawkins and Laudonnière were settling what was to be done to get the Frenchmen out of their difficulties, for they could not be left to die in Florida.

We have a good account of Hawkins’ visit to the river May from Laudonnière himself, who published his *Notable Historie* a few years later.

He records that on August 3rd, 1565, he descried four sails while he walked on a little hill near his fort, and that he was alarmed, fearing that they were Spanish. He soon learned that they were Englishmen in quest of water,

and he gave them leave to land and help themselves. The pilot of the English was a man from Dieppe, named Martine Atinas, who was already known to Laudonnière, since they had sailed to Florida together in 1562. The next day Hawkins and his officers landed "honorably apparelled, yet unarmed." In whatever straits M. Laudonnière might be, he knew what was expected of a French gentleman. A feast was prepared ; the last remaining chickens were killed, cooked and served up in Hawkins' honour.

During the next few days the Indians came in from all the surrounding country to see Hawkins, asking if he was the French Commander's brother. Laudonnière, who was always alive to the situation, assured them that Hawkins was indeed his own brother, and had come all that way in his ship to bring him victuals, so that henceforward he would not have to beg any from the Indians.

The two commanders now began to discuss matters. To Hawkins it was obvious that the French colony was in great distress, so he magnanimously offered to transport the whole company back to France. This offer the Frenchman flatly refused, for fear the English might themselves supplant him, and he had no direct knowledge of how his country and England stood with each other. The news of this refusal soon spread amongst the beleaguered French, who threatened mutiny if their leader did not accept this providential opportunity for escape.

Hawkins next offered to sell to Laudonnière one of his smaller ships, and to transport part of the French force, with their commander and their store of silver, to Europe, giving his solemn pledge to land them at some port in France before going himself to England, for he knew well enough that if his Royal mistress got wind of the silver aboard the ship, she would find some excuse for confiscating it.

This offer was agreed upon and Laudonnière gave

Hawkins a note of hand to pay for the ship when he reached Europe ; but it is known that twenty years later the debt was still unhonoured.

To relieve the settlers of their immediate wants Hawkins provided them with " fifty pairs of shoes, for a price, also a great jar of oil, a jar of vinegar, a barill of olives, and a great quantity of rice ; as well as a barrel of white biscuit," wherein doubtless the grateful Laudonnière adds " hee hath wonne the reputation of a good and Charitable man deserving to be esteemed as much of us all as if he had saved our lives."

Generous as Hawkins' behaviour was to the beleaguered French colony, we cannot believe that he was altogether without a thought for the future. He must have known that, could he remove this thorn in the side of Spain, he might hope for a more lenient view to be taken by the Spanish Authorities of his late adventures on the Spanish Main.

Owing to the trend of the Gulf Stream and the north-easterly direction of the trade winds, it was impossible for the Spanish galleons, heavily laden with their cargoes of precious metals and other goods, to sail directly from the ports of Mexico to the west. Their only course was to pass along the Florida channel. From their hiding-place at the mouth of the river May the French were able, and wont, to pounce out on any passing ship, seize it and carry it into their lair, much as a hunting spider does a passing fly. Not only this, but Hawkins must have known that the English Government, too, would have been not a little pleased to hear of the end of this upstart French colony in Florida, on which they looked with strong disfavour.

Although, as far as Hawkins is concerned, Laudonnière and his followers pass out of the story, it is worth while telling, quite briefly, the end of that adventure in colonization. At the very hour when the English and French

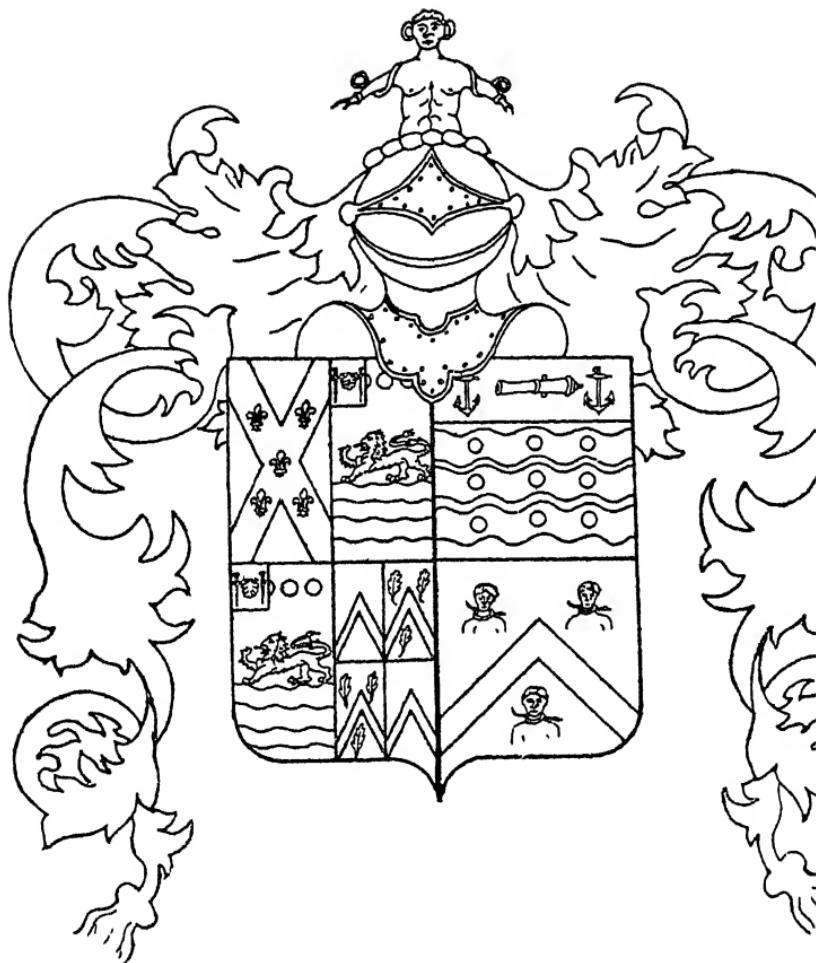
leaders were saying friendly farewells, two separate fleets were sailing across the Atlantic, both with the river May as their objective. One of these was French, under the command of Admiral Jean Ribault, who was bringing with him some 300 men and women to establish and consolidate the position already staked out by the pioneers. They reached Florida in safety on August 28th, 1565.

A week later there arrived at the same anchorage the other fleet. This was a Spanish one under the command of Don Pero Menendez de Aviles, and was the most formidable flotilla that had ever been despatched to the west. Finding he had arrived just too late to catch the French unprepared, he built a strong fort at St. Augustine a little further along the coast, and sent to San Domingo for all the armed men that could be spared.

As it happened, he did not have to await the arrival of these reinforcements, for Jean Ribault decided to attack first. Leaving a small body of troops to protect the fort and the women, he set out in all the vessels he had at his command, and steered for St. Augustine. Suddenly a violent tempest arose, scattering the ships, most of which were driven ashore and wrecked at various places along the coast.

Meanwhile Menendez marched towards the French fort, attacked and took it, massacring most of the defenders. A mere handful escaped, including Laudonnière, who got away in a small craft and eventually reached France.

Menendez next turned about and marched down the coast, "mopping up" each disorganized band of Frenchmen he met with. Although the French laid down their arms and surrendered on sight, the avenging Spaniards butchered them all, except only ten men whom, being Catholics, they spared. Thus ended the French attempt at colonization in Florida. Spain, ever dilatory, was apt,



THE ARMS OF SIR JOHN HAWKINS

*Impaling Gonson and Va*

NOTE THE 'DEMI-MOOR' CREST, GRANTED AS AUGMENTATION FOR HAWKINS'S VICTORY  
THE MOORS IN 1561

when at last driven to action, to be both thorough and ruthless.

On August 28th Hawkins sailed from the river May, leaving the French to follow as soon as they could. Day after day head winds prevailed and victuals ran short, until they "were in despair of ever cumming home . . . in which state of great misery, we were provoked to call upon Him by fervent prayer, which moved Him to hear us, so that we had a prosperous wind." This prosperous wind, which carried the ships to the banks of Newfoundland, was followed by a calm, and they put out fish lines and caught a quantity of cod which for a time relieved their hunger. Five days later they met, far out in the North Atlantic, a couple of French fishing-boats. Out of these they took a good store of fish, for which, to the uncontrolled surprise of the French, Hawkins paid full value. Three weeks later, on September 20th, 1565, the squadron reached Padstow in Cornwall. The total loss of life in the whole fleet was but twenty men, seven of whom had been killed fighting the negroes in Guinea. This was an exceptionally small death-rate for a voyage of this kind, and was due, in no small part, to the great care and thoughtfulness Hawkins always took over the feeding and well-being of his crews. The voyage, from the point of view of the promoters, was all that they could have wished, since the final profit was declared to be at the rate of sixty per cent., and this after the Queen had been paid £500 to make good all damages to the "Jesus of Lubeck."

On arriving at Padstow, Hawkins, with his usual promptness, despatched a letter to the Queen, to report his safe return. It ran as follows :

" 1565, September 20th, Padstow : Pleaseth it Your Majesty to be informed that the 20th day of September I arrived in a port of Cornwall called Padstow with your

Majesty's ship the 'Jesus,' in good safety—Thanks be to God, our voyage being reasonably well accomplished according to our pretence. Your Majesty's commandment at my departing from Your Grace at Enfield I have accomplished so as I doubt not but it shall be found honourable to Your Highness, for I have always been a help to all Spaniards and Partygals that have come in my way, without any force or prejudice by me offered to any of them, although many times in this tract they have been under my power. I have also discovered the coast of Florida in those parts where there is thought to be any great wealth, and because I will not be tedious unto Your Highness I have declared the commodities of it to Mr. Winter, who will shew my Lord Robert of it at large."

John Hawkins was now the hero of the hour, and was feted wherever he went. The Spanish Ambassador, writing to King Philip in November, described how "I met him in the palace and invited him to dine with me. He gave me a full account of his voyage, keeping back only the way in which he had continued to trade at our ports. He assured me, on the contrary, that he had given the greatest satisfaction to all the Spaniards with whom he had dealings, and had received full permission of the governors of the towns where he had been. The vast profit made by the voyage has excited other merchants to undertake similar expeditions. Hawkins himself is going out again next May, and the thing needs immediate attention. I might tell the Queen that by his own confession, he had traded in ports prohibited by your Majesty, and require her to punish him, but I must request your Majesty to give me full and clear instructions what to do." This letter had its effect, for in the following October, just as Hawkins was ready to start on his next voyage, a letter reached him at Plymouth,

from Cecil, forbidding him in the Queen's name to traffic at any places privileged by the King of Spain, and requiring from him a bond in £500 before his vessels were allowed to leave. Hawkins paid the money, and the fleet left, but he himself stayed behind. We have no account of this voyage, but probably it ended satisfactorily from the point of view of the promoters.



## CHAPTER III

### THE TROUBLESOME VOYAGE



THE story of this epoch-making voyage has come down to us from several sources, so that we know more about this third slaving voyage than about either of the two previous ones. John Hawkins himself published a meagre and somewhat modified narrative in 1569, entitled "A true Declaration of the troublesome voyage of Mr. John Hawkins to the Ports of Guinea and the West Indies in the year of our Lord 1567 and 1568." This, as Mr. Williamson points out, was evidently written as a piece of propaganda, with an eye to the relations between England, Spain and Portugal.

Until quite lately, the only other narratives known were written by two members of Hawkins' crews, Miles Philips and Job Hortop, the latter being gunner of the "Jesus." Both were taken prisoner by the Spaniards after the disaster of San Juan de Ulua, and after many years of captivity returned to their native land and published their stories.

Quite recently the indefatigable Mr. Williamson has unearthed in the Cottonian MSS.<sup>1</sup> a long and detailed account of this voyage, written by an unknown hand, though the probability is that it was from the pen of one Valentine Verde—or Green, who was taken prisoner at San Juan de Ulua, three days after the abrupt termination of the journal.

<sup>1</sup> Otho: E. viii., ff. 17-41 b.

It was on October 2, 1567, that Hawkins led out his little fleet of six ships from Plymouth Sound.

Hawkins himself sailed in the "Jesus of Lubeck," the same Royal ship which he commanded on his previous voyage; Robert Barrett was Master, and she carried a crew of 180 men. Her armament consisted of a bewildering assortment of sixteenth-century "murdering pieces," which included: two whole culverins; two cannons; eight demi-culverins; eight sacres; two falcons; two whole slings; ten fowlers; and thirty bases. To feed these she carried fifty-four barrels of gunpowder and a suitable quantity of ball.

The rest of the fleet consisted of the "Minion," also a Royal ship, commanded by Captain John Hampton, John Garret of Plymouth being Master, the same who was described by Raleigh as a seaman of "the greatest experience in England."

The "Swallow," a ship of 100 tons, also belonged to Hawkins, as did the little "Angel" of 32 tons.

The "William and John," belonging to the Hawkins' firm, was commanded by Captain Thomas Bolon, with James Raunce for Master.

Lastly, the "Judith," 50 tons, was commanded by her owner, Francis Drake, the young nephew of the Admiral.

In all 408 men and boys were carried as well as certain gentlemen-adventurers.

Most of these were destined never again to see their native land. Death waited for them in many forms. Some were to die in fights with negroes and Spaniards, some of tropical fevers, others of thirst or hunger; while a few were destined to be burned at the stake as heretics by the Holy Inquisition at Seville; indeed, of all these men who set out so light-heartedly barely a fifth survived to return to England.

The very commencement of the voyage opened with

a tragedy, for as the "Jesus" weighed in the Thames, after taking on board her guns at the Tower, to join the rest of the fleet at Plymouth, and while her decks were crowded with friends come to say farewell, some heavy gear broke loose and "slew a maiden," an incident which proved afterwards to be "an omen of an ill-starred voyage."

While the fleet was still lying at Plymouth Sound, making their final preparations, and a gale was blowing in the Channel, there suddenly entered a squadron of seven warships, flying Spanish flags. Taking no notice of the Queen's two warships lying in the Catwater, the Spaniards proceeded towards an anchorage close by, without saluting the English Admiral. This insult to the Queen was too much for Hawkins, who without more ado opened fire. After several shots he was compelled to "hull" the Spanish flagship, which brought the Admiral, Baron de Wachen, to his senses, for he struck his flags and vailed his top-sails. This incident led to much angry expostulation, followed by strong and indignant remonstrances by the Spanish Ambassador to the Queen. Shortly after this affair, which might easily have led to serious international complications, another incident took place, which annoyed the Spanish still more. On board one of the Spanish ships were a number of wretched Flemish prisoners, condemned to serve in the galleys. One afternoon, when the crew were asleep, a gang of masked men crept on board, closed the hatches on the Spaniards, and let the prisoners escape. The Spanish Admiral was furious, and accused Hawkins of having arranged and carried out the whole plot; while Hawkins emphatically declared that the first he heard of the matter was on the following day. He was probably right when he said that most likely the plot had been hatched and carried out by some of the numerous Flemish refugees then in Plymouth.

At last everything was in readiness, and with a sigh of relief Hawkins gave the signal to weigh, but not without final instructions to his Captains that, in the event of the fleet becoming separated, each ship was to make for Tenerife, and there wait until the others arrived.

For the first three days all went well, but on the fourth, when off Cape Finisterre, a great gale arose which continued without a lull for four days. The fleet was broken up and scattered. It was usual for ships to tow "great boats," in each of which two sailors were left in charge to regulate the steering. Three of these great boats broke away and were lost, and the men in them drowned, with the exception of the two in the "Jesus" boat, who would have met with a like fate but for "the general's industry."

The "Jesus" came very badly through this storm. Owing to her top-hamper, high poop and fo'c'sle, she became severely strained and began to leak in several places. Finally she opened a seam in her stern, that took fifteen pieces of baize, well rammed home, to stop the inrush of sea. No sooner was one leak located and stopped than another would be discovered, and all the while the gale continued to rage. Day and night the pumps were kept working, but at last matters became so grave that Hawkins summoned all hands, and solemnly warned them that the ship might founder at any moment.

"His countenance never revealed his sorrow, but his words pierced the hearts of all his hearers, and it seemed unto them that death had summoned them when they heard him recite the aforesaid words; for they knew such words could not issue from so invincible a mind without great cause. There was not one that could refrain his eyes from tears, the which, when our general saw, he began to enter in prayer and besought them to

pray with him, the while indeed he yet letted not with great travail to search the ship fore and aft for her leaks."

Shortly afterwards the storm blew itself out, and by the morning of October 11th a northerly breeze had sprung up. Again the crews were assembled, and Hawkins returned thanks to God for their unlooked-for preservation, and told the company that, instead of returning to England for repairs as he had intended, they would continue towards their prearranged meeting-place at the Canaries.

So, in company with the "Angel," the only ship of the fleet that had not disappeared, they journeyed forwards, picking up the "Judith" a few days later.

Sailing with a favourable wind the three ships arrived at Santa Cruz in Tenerife on October 23rd, and exchanged salutes in the roadstead with several Spanish ships that were lying at anchor there, bound for the West Indies. Hawkins' first act was to send ashore a messenger with a letter to the Governor, acquainting him with the fact that he had come there to await the other ships of his fleet, and to purchase certain necessities. The Governor replied in civil terms, inviting Hawkins to come ashore and visit him. The wary English Captain politely declined the invitation, giving as his excuse that the Queen had given him strict commands not to leave his ship. This did not prevent many of the nobility of the island from coming on board the "Jesus," where they were royally entertained by the English officers.

During their sojourn in the port, a quarrel took place between two of the officers of the "Jesus": Edward Dudley, a land Captain, and George Fitzwilliam, who had sailed with Hawkins on his previous voyage.

We do not know the cause of the quarrel, and the "General" himself heard nothing of it until he was informed that Dudley had already gone ashore fully

armed and was awaiting the arrival of Fitzwilliam, as they had arranged to settle their dispute by a duel. Hawkins ordered Fitzwilliam to remain on board and sent for Dudley to return to the ship. When the latter appeared, Hawkins tried to persuade him to forget the quarrel, or if that was impossible, to postpone fighting a duel until some more suitable time and place, rather than to pursue it "in the midst of our enemies the Spaniards."

Dudley resented his Chief's interference, and said something that aroused Hawkins' wrath so much that "our general struck him with his fist," whereupon Dudley, losing his temper, drew his dagger, which was two feet long, and lunged at Hawkins who at once drew his weapon and the two set about each other. Before the bystanders could drag Dudley away his hand and arm were cut, while Hawkins received an ugly stab just above his right eye. The crowd of officers and men rushed angrily at Dudley, and would have killed him had not the Captain forbidden them to hurt him.

Instead he had him clapped in irons, while he himself went below to his cabin to have his wound dressed.

Again the whole company was mustered and Dudley brought before the General. Hawkins then asked the prisoner if he was not ashamed of his behaviour. The wretched Dudley, all his rage and anger having gone as quickly as it came, now "fell down on his knees and with tears confessed that he had committed such an offence that he was utterly ashamed thereof and acknowledged that, he having had the charge of men, if any soldier of his had done the like unto him he would have hanged him therefor, but he besought the General to be good to him."

Hawkins replied that if the offence had been only a personal one to himself he could have overlooked it, "but considering the place where they were, and the

ships the Queen's, and so many men that Her Grace had given him charge of, that by his disobedience all might be put in danger, he must needs be punished therefor."

Calling for an arquebus to be loaded with two bullets, he told Dudley to prepare himself for instant death. Hawkins then took the loaded and primed weapon in his own hands, and turning to the kneeling officer asked him if he had said his prayers and was ready. Dudley, weeping and ashamed, replied "that he had done with the world and was ready to receive the punishment that the General would appoint him." By this time the bystanders were all crying out, imploring Hawkins to have pity and spare Dudley. Hawkins seemed to take no notice of them, but suddenly, just as he appeared about to execute the culprit, he laid down the weapon and ordered the prisoner's irons to be struck off. Then, taking Dudley gently by the hand, he raised him to his feet, embraced him, telling him that the matter was now done with, and was to be regarded as if it had never happened, "the which was seen after for he loved the said Mr. Dudley after, far better than before."

Edward Dudley did not live long after this adventure, dying a few weeks later, on the voyage between Guinea and the West Indies.

This story, which is told in none of the contemporary published accounts of this voyage, gives a vivid insight into Hawkins' character, his quiet sternness combined with a tenderness of feeling which was by no means a characteristic of the seafaring commanders of the time.

Always just, he was a stern disciplinarian, and at the same time a deeply religious man, and it was just the combination of these qualities that enabled him to hold together his crews.

We have an account, left by a seaman who served on the "Jesus," of a daily event which took place on board. He describes it in these words : "During the Voyage

out of the fleet, when night fell and the new watch began to come on deck and the hour glass was turned, everybody on board the ship would assemble round the mainmast, kneeling and bareheaded, and the quarter-master praying, and everyone would recite the Psalms of David, Our Father, and the Creed, in the English tongue." It was another sailor who, under cross-examination by the *familias* at Mexico, added that those who showed any inclination to abstain from these drum-head services were rewarded by the quarter-master with a rope's end ! But this was probably only a clumsy attempt by some terrified mariner to please the Inquisition, and so escape the usual punishment awarded to English prisoners caught in America.

Meanwhile the fleet lay at anchor in the harbour at Santa Cruz close under the walls of the castle ; though between them and the latter rode several Spanish ships. On the evening of the fourth day, "at the shutting of night," these Spanish vessels quietly moved away, leaving the English fleet in easy range of the guns from the castle.

Hawkins, who all along had mistrusted the Governor of Tenerife in spite of his friendly advances, believed this to have been done by his orders so that he could open fire and sink the English ships early in the morning, as soon as it was light, and before giving them a chance of escape. It is more than likely that the astute English Admiral had chosen his anchorage on purpose to have the Spanish ships as a screen in case of treachery. In any case he was taking no risks and, as the sun rose next morning and the sea-mist cleared, the Governor beheld the English fleet lying quietly and safely at anchor some six miles away from Santa Cruz on October 28th. Hawkins, having finished taking in water, decided to up anchor and be gone, and so set sail for Gomera, an island of the Canary group. On touching there he found the

“Minion,” the “William and John” and the “Swallow” awaiting his arrival and ready to leave, which they all did on November 4th.

The first point on the West African coast that they sighted was Cape Blanco. Here they found several Portuguese caravels which had been fishing. On hailing them Hawkins found them in a sorry condition. Only one of the vessels had anybody on board, the crews of the rest having deserted and gone on shore some three weeks earlier, after being plundered by a squadron of French pirates. Hawkins, to replace the pinnace which had been lost in the great storm, appropriated the best of the Portuguese vessels, explaining to the Portuguese Master, who perhaps did not quite understand his methods, that as he, Hawkins, had found these boats abandoned at sea they were, by sea-law, his own rightful property.

Having chosen the best caravel for himself, he “sold” the rest back to the Portuguese for a bill of thirty ducats, payable at London on a future date.

All these proceedings strike one as being very near the knuckle of piracy, but it was typical of Hawkins to quote sea-law and demand notes of hand, giving the whole business an air of legality.

Shortly after this episode, Hawkins came upon the very French pirates who had plundered the Portuguese. While sailing south of Cape Verde he ran across them, trading with the negroes. The French, who were sailing in the best of the Portuguese ships so recently stolen, hoisted their sails and tried to escape, but the English soon overtook and stopped them, demanding an explanation of their recent doings. One of the pirate ships was far superior to the rest, and Hawkins, who had as sure an eye for a ship as some men have for a horse, determined to possess her. Any little difficulties which may have appeared were soon swept aside by Hawkins’

application of his usual law of the sea, which he so often found useful in similar delicate situations. Hawkins had also an eye for a good seaman, and he was much taken by the cut and bearing of Captain Bland, the French pirate who commanded the finest ship. He once again had recourse to his methods of sea-law ; with the result that he took not only the ship but also the Captain. For a while Francis Drake was put in command of the new ship, now rechristened the "Gratia Dei," which may seem an odd name to have chosen for this doubly stolen vessel. In due course Captain Bland was reinstated in his command, and proved how right Hawkins was in his judgment of men, for many months later, when the English were in desperate straits at San Juan de Ulua, Bland behaved with the utmost loyalty and gallantry.

But to return to Cape Blanco. The business of taking the Portuguese ships and selling them back took some time, the Portuguese not being so brisk in matters of trade as was our Plymouth merchant. At the end of fifteen days, however, all was settled, anyhow to the satisfaction of the English "General," and he bade farewell to the Portuguese and set sail for Cape Verde, where he hoped to begin slave collecting.

Arriving in the middle of the night, Hawkins lost no time. Two hours before dawn, he landed on the beach, at the head of two hundred armed men, intending to catch the unsuspecting natives asleep in their palm-leaf huts. But this well-laid plan miscarried. The negroes, instead of sleeping quietly and being captured as they should have been, were wide awake and attacked the English with bows and arrows, with the result that the whole bag numbered but nine slaves, and these mostly women and children.

The negroes used such ridiculously small bows that the Englishmen laughed aloud to see them, after the

long bows which they themselves were accustomed to, merely smiling at the little pin-pricks the arrows made when they struck their legs or arms. But this contempt was changed to fear when, a few days afterwards, they began to realize that these arrows must have been poisoned, for of the ten Englishmen wounded eight died of tetanus, the only two to survive being Hawkins and Dudley, who both escaped, probably because they washed their wounds directly the fight was over.

This affair having aroused the whole neighbourhood, Hawkins decided to seek a fresh hunting-ground further south.

Anchoring off Cape Roxo, to the south of the river Gambia, on November 29th, he sent three smaller craft, well manned and armed, up the river San Domingo. If we are to believe the Portuguese account of this affair, preserved in the Record Office, the English seized the six Portuguese vessels they found lying peacefully at anchor there, with their cargoes, which included slaves, and were valued at 27,000 ducats ; and then these free-booters landed, set fire to and destroyed a town called Cacheo, plundering it to the tune of 30,000 ducats, and killing several Portuguese.

So much for the Portuguese account, which bluntly accuses Hawkins of being a pirate, and not without some justification. The other narrators vary in their story of this incident.

Hawkins, in his own log, merely states the bare fact that on November 24th they arrived at "Cape Roxo alias St. Domingos," and makes no further entry until December 14th, when "we saw the Idolos" (Los Islands).

The account in the Cottonian MSS. is clear, and only differs in certain points from the Portuguese report.

Here it is stated that Robert Barrett, the Master of the "Jesus," was in command of a landing party of 240

men. He was to have opened trade with the Portuguese but did not succeed in getting more than "opprobrious words." Barrett, finding persuasion of little use, decided to resort to force. He led his 240 men against the town of Cacheo, which lay about one mile inland. In the meantime the Portuguese had collected an army of 6000 negroes and had hidden some of them in ambush. The English, unopposed, entered the town and set fire to it, but, all of a sudden, were attacked from all sides by hordes of blacks, led by the Portuguese.

Retreating seawards, the English fell into the ambush and were set upon with clubs, hatchets, and poisoned arrows.

Barrett eventually got back with the loss of four men killed and many wounded, and never a slave to show for his pains.

The General was exceedingly angry with Barrett for his bad handling of this expedition, and told him that his proper business, as a sailor, was to seize the Portuguese ships that were lying higher up the river and not to go attacking the enemy ashore, which was work better done by soldiers.

No doubt Hawkins had some excuse for this ruthless handling of the Portuguese. Since his last voyage to the Guinea coast in 1564, an English ship, the "Mary Fortune," belonging to the brothers William and George Winter, had been sunk by the Portuguese without any justification whatever, and those of the crew who escaped drowning had been taken prisoner, for no better reason than that they had attempted peaceful trade along the coast.

The fleet now moved slowly along the coast, raiding parties in craft of shallow draught being sent up each river they passed in search of negroes.

On one of these expeditions a pinnace was sunk by a hippopotamus and, if we are to believe Job Hortop, two of the mariners were devoured by the monster,

Thus they worked their way towards Sierra Leone and, although no big prizes were secured, they captured a few negroes here and there until they had collected altogether 150 of these valuable pieces of living merchandise.

According to the same Portuguese account quoted above, most of these slaves were taken by force out of Portuguese ships, whose crews were overpowered by Hawkins' men. Indeed they added that in some cases Captain Hawkins had put the Portuguese Captains to torture, to compel them to sign a document stating that they sold the slaves of their own free will. The accusation that Hawkins tortured the Portuguese is an obvious untruth, but the assertion that he insisted on a signed document has a plausible sound about it. Hawkins was now in rather a quandary. He had only 150 slaves on board, which it would scarcely pay him to take all the way to the West Indies, and he was just deliberating on the wisdom of pushing on to the Gold Coast, which he had never previously visited, when a stroke of good luck occurred. News was brought him that two local kings, those of Sierra Leone and Castros, were at war with two neighbouring sovereigns, and planning to attack a town, on the river Tagarin, called Conga. This Conga was rather a hard nut to crack, and the negro strategists proposed that Hawkins should bombard the town from the water-side, while the native allies attacked the town from the land-side. Here was the very opportunity which Hawkins needed, so he consented to take part in the attack on one condition only : that he should be given all the prisoners taken by the allies.

Robert Barrett, in spite of his Admiral's caustic observations on sailors who went soldiering, was sent on shore at the head of a party of ninety men to reconnoitre. He reported the town to be strongly fortified and defended by vast numbers of very determined-looking negroes,

and in the first attack twenty Englishmen were wounded. Hawkins hurried up with reinforcements, himself at their head, and a great combined assault took place at the sound of his trumpet, while he pledged himself and his allies "that they should go at it with stomach on both sides." Whether as the result of these stirring words or not, the grand attack was successful, but not without dreadful carnage on both sides. The English fought gallantly and advanced in spite of ditches, pitfalls, and loopholed defences ; in the face of clouds of arrows and spears. Forcing a way into the town after a hard struggle, they fixed blazing torches on to their pikes, and set fire to the combustible palm-thatched dwellings.

Nine Englishmen were killed, while almost half their number were wounded, but Hawkins, who was in the van during the whole attack, escaped without a scratch.

The moment victory was accomplished the most revolting scenes took place ; cannibalism ran mad, and the negro victors ended up by driving vast numbers of the vanquished into the muddy river to drown.

Hawkins and his men had, with their own hands, captured 160 negroes, and with some others handed over by their allies, they soon had all together 470 captives safely in irons on board the ships. These were considered enough to make the voyage to the West Indies well worth while, as they had on board other merchandise to traffic as well as "black ivory." All the same, Hawkins felt aggrieved with the allied Kings for having drowned so many valuable negroes which they had sworn to give him in return for his help. However, it was time to be away and across the Atlantic as his crews were going sick, for the fevers of the West Coast were telling on them. Also the stormy season was nearly due, when navigation in the Caribbean Sea was known to be perilous.

Just as they were about to weigh and start on the

long journey across the “ Ocean Sea,” a French privateer, with a cargo of iron goods, came along and volunteered to sail with Hawkins, and to serve under his command. The offer was accepted, and this addition to its numbers brought the squadron up to nine.

We know but little about the ensuing voyage to the West Indies, except that it took much longer than usual, dragging its weary course for fifty-two days. The death-rate amongst the wretched slaves shackled down below decks is not recorded. The average loss on a voyage from West Africa to the West Indies stood at twenty per cent. ; which means that twenty of these unfortunate negroes were expected to die out of every hundred carried, and this on passages of considerably shorter time than fifty-two days.

The squadron arrived on March 27th at the island of Dominica, where they stopped only long enough to take in fresh water and then sailed on to Margarita, the large island off the coast of Venezuela, where Hawkins began his West Indian trading on his previous voyage. The settlement on this island had only fifty Spaniards to protect it, and these fled at the first appearance of the English fleet, in the belief that they were French pirates, of whom they lived in constant dread.

Hawkins at once sent a boat to the shore carrying a letter, written in Spanish, to the Governor.

Few of these letters written by Hawkins to the Governors of the Spanish American ports have been preserved, and it is interesting to read this example. The translation into English runs as follows :

“ WORSHIPFUL,

I have touched in your island only to the intent to refresh my men with fresh victuals, which for my money or my wares you shall sell me, meaning to stay only but 5 or 6 days here at the furthest. In

the which time you may assure yourself, and so all others, that by me or by any of mine there shall no damage be done to any man ; the which also the Queen's Majesty of England, my mistress, at my departure out of England commanded me to have great care of, and to serve with my navy the King's Majesty of Spain, my old master, if in places where I came any of his stood in need."

This letter is interesting in several ways. Like all Hawkins' writings it is carefully compiled, and is the work of a diplomat. The service which he offers to the King of Spain in his American possessions no doubt refers to his willingness to protect his Majesty's ships or property from the ruthless French corsairs that were the scourge of the Caribbean Sea. The touch about "my old master" is typical of Hawkins, for, although to us at first it appears meaningless, there is some excuse for the phrase when we recollect that only ten years before King Philip had been King of England as well as of Spain, and John Hawkins, as freeman of Plymouth, had helped to entertain the monarch at a feast in his honour when he visited that town as the bridegroom of Queen Mary, in the year 1554.

At first the Spaniards refused to accept the letter, but eventually they took it and delivered it to the Governor.

A reply soon came back, written in the most polite manner, referring in handsome terms not only to the integrity and prestige of Hawkins, but also to the beauty of the Queen of England, his mistress. The writer concluded by adding that he was confined to his bed with sickness, but that nevertheless he would be glad to receive the English General at 9 o'clock the following morning.

The meeting took place as arranged, Hawkins attended by his gentlemen all dressed in their best, while the

Governor (apparently restored to health) was surrounded by the most important of the Spanish residents.

Before the banquet the Governor led Hawkins on a tour of inspection of the town, pointing out to him the remains of several houses that had been burnt by some French corsairs who had raided the settlement not long since.

The squadron spent nine pleasant days at Margarita, buying oxen and sheep and other supplies, which were paid for in kind. Each day feasts took place ; sometimes the Governor came off to dine on board the "Jesus," while on other days Hawkins was his guest on land.

Leaving Margarita on April 9th they steered for Borburata, on the Spanish Main, which they reached on April 17th.

On Hawkins' previous voyage, two years before, he had done very good business at this port and he had every expectation of doing well again.

The Governor of the province was away at the time, visiting the new settlement at Santiago de Leon, and Hawkins wrote him the following letter :

" WORSHIPFUL,

This voyage on the which I am bound was ordered by the Queen's Majesty of England, my mistress, another way, and not intended for these parts, and the charges being made in England, before I was ready to set sail the pretence was forcibly overturned. Nevertheless I was commanded by the Queen's Majesty, my mistress, to seek some other traffic with the wares which I already had and negroes which I should procure in Guinea to lighten the great charges hazarded in the setting out of this navy. I know the King of Spain your master, unto whom also I have been a servant, and am commanded by the Queen my mistress to serve

with my navy as need requireth, hath forbidden that you shall give licence to any stranger to traffic. I will not therefore request any such thing at your hand, but that you will licence me to sell 60 negroes only and a parcel of my wares which in all is but little for the payment of the soldiers I have in my ships. In this you shall not break the commandment of your prince, but do him good service and avoid divers inconveniences which happen often times through being too precise in obeying precepts without consideration. If you may, I most instantly desire you that you will take the pains to come hither that I might confer with you myself; truly it would be liefer to me than 10,000 ducats. If you come you should not find me ingrateful nor count your travail lost."

We recognize in this letter a similar offer of armed service to that in his previous letter to the Governor of Margarita. What strikes one as a new departure is the blatant hint of a bribe to the Governor if he should grant the desired licence.

In the meantime, while the crews were kept busily employed carrying fresh water to the ships, it was reported to Hawkins that there was a Bishop at Valencia, in the interior, a man of considerable wealth and importance, for, apart from his high ecclesiastical position, he owned large herds of cattle and other property. Hawkins at once decided to write a letter to the Bishop, begging leave to purchase some of his cattle, but with the ulterior motive of procuring an ally who might persuade the Governor to grant him a licence. The fact of his being a wicked heretic did not seem to deter Hawkins from asking favours of the Bishop; but then Hawkins did not clearly define his religious beliefs until later, and many Spaniards believed for some years afterwards that he was a Catholic. No doubt this was all part of

Hawkins' scheme, but it was also a wise policy on the part of a Protestant Englishman who had dealings with the Spaniards and Spain to lay as little emphasis as possible on his religious beliefs. It must be remembered, too, that in England there had been, during the last four reigns, several changes of the official religion between Rome and Canterbury, and the average subject found it best to conform to whatever belief was at the moment the recognized one. The hatred between the Catholics and Protestants had not yet reached the bitter stage which it did some few years after, when, to an Englishman, Protestantism and Patriotism stood for one and the same thing. Here is Hawkins' letter to the Bishop, and one can almost see the good Captain squaring his elbows at the table in his great cabin while he composed it :

“ RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

I arrived hither in this port of Borburata 4 days agone, where I have heard of your good fame, the which hath stirred me to write unto you and to desire you that I may have brought hither to the port 100 oxen to serve my turn while I am in this port, and I will pay for them and for the bringing of them hither as you shall appoint. I have to sell 60 negroes and a parcel of my wares to help lighten the charges of this voyage whereon I now am, and was not thought to have been made to any of these parts, but that things have happened contrary. I beseech you to be a mean to the Governor all you may that my request to him may take effect, and anything that I may pleasure you in, you shall command it, the which you shall have the better proof of if you would do me so much honour as to visit me in this port.”

Was this irrepressible English Captain daring to suggest by the last part of his letter that the Right

Reverend Bishop too might be willing to accept a bribe ? It certainly has that appearance. At all events it brought a most polite and even cordial reply from the Bishop, who promised to put in a good word for him with the Governor, but begged to be excused from visiting Hawkins at Borburata, pleading his great age and failing health.

No apparent harm having been done by Hawkins' letter, he followed it up by sending the Bishop some handsome gifts, which His Grace received with much goodwill.

At the end of a fortnight the reply arrived from the Governor of Venezuela. It ran as follows, and is a masterpiece in the art of polite refusal :

“ RIGHT WORSHIPFUL,

Your arrival here, seeing I cannot show you any pleasure, is unto me a great grief, considering your merits. I am sure you know what strait charge the King of Spain my master hath given that no stranger be licenced to traffic in no part of the India ; the which if I should break before my eyes, I saw the governor my predecessor carried away prisoner unto Spain for providing licence to the country to traffic with you at your last being here, an example for me that I fall not into the like or worse. I pray you therefore hold me excused, and think that as you would observe the commandment of your mistress the Queen of England, so must I not break that one jot the King my master commandeth me, with the which the proverb agreeth well that saith, ‘ Do thy master’s will and commandment, and thou shalt sit with him at his table.’ ”

This refusal might have discouraged a less determined man than Hawkins ; but it had no such effect on him, for he was fortified by the knowledge that, however much

the Governor might forbid his trading, his subjects, one and all, were eager to buy his slaves and not miss this golden and unexpected opportunity for exchange of goods. Already the news had spread, and several Spanish traders had come from Valencia in the hope that the licence would be granted. After the Governor's refusal they went home again, but before leaving gave a hint to Hawkins that he should send troops to Valencia and compel them to buy his goods. In anticipation that the Governor would reprimand them for trading with the English, they could plead that they did so against their free will, and so escape confiscation or other punishment. This plan was quite to the liking of Hawkins, who ordered Robert Barrett to proceed with sixty men to Valencia.

Unfortunately heavy rainstorms delayed their march, which gave the local justices time to act, so that when Barrett and his men arrived at Valencia they found the place deserted, all the inhabitants except one sick priest having fled, carrying their valuables along with them. Even the friendly Bishop had vanished with his flock, "but nevertheless he left in his house provision of victuals for our men." The sailors "refreshed themselves in the Bishop's house," and then returned to the ship with full bellies if empty hands. The naturalist of the party, honest Job Hortop, found only one incident worthy of recording about this belated expedition, which was that they saw "a monstrous venomous worme with two heads, his bodeye as big as a mans arme, and a yard long," which the valiant Barrett "did cut in sunder with his sword, and it made it as blacke as if it were coloured with ynke." Truly a terrifying reptile !

Hawkins stayed at Borburata until the beginning of April, doing quite a fair business, "still selling every day some wares," so that evidently the Governor relented, possibly as the result of a bribe, and more than

likely encouraged by the Bishop. Hawkins then decided to try his luck elsewhere, but before sailing in the big ship, sent his smaller craft ahead to Curaçao, with orders to kill and dry enough cattle and sheep to supply the entire fleet with beef and mutton for the homeward voyage.

The friendly Bishop of Valencia, as a parting gift, probably at the suggestion of the persuasive Hawkins, gave him letters of recommendation to all and sundry along the Spanish Main.

Hawkins followed on to Curaçao, but stopped there only two days, when he left for Rio de la Hacha. To this port he had already despatched the "Judith," with Drake in command, and the "Angel."

We see here the different methods employed by the older Hawkins and the younger Drake. The former on such occasions always opened proceedings with a polite letter to the Governor. The latter's method was to get to business at once without any preliminary compliments in writing. In this case Drake's first act was to plump a brace of cannon balls right through the Treasurer's house. This dignitary was a Señor Miguel de Castellanos, and Drake considered he owed the Spaniard a grudge, since only the year before the Treasurer of Rio de la Hacha had defrauded Captain Lovell, and Drake had been one of the victims of his deceit.

After this spirited demonstration of revenge and good gunnery, Drake anchored out of range of the guns of the fort, and proceeded to establish a blockade of the port, until Hawkins should appear. While he was waiting, a fast-sailing despatch boat arrived from San Domingo. Drake gave chase and took her under the very walls of the fort.

On June 10th, the "Jesus" and the rest of the fleet arrived and Hawkins opened fire, not with a gun but with his usual letter to the Treasurer, though couched

in different style. It began with a reference to the affair of Captain Lovell :

“ My ships which I sent hither last year with negroes and other merchandise, you being the chief cause, came all in a mis-carriage, which being reported among divers venturers my loss was the more tolerable, and I cannot lay the fault so much the less upon you that I blame not much more the simpleness of my deputies who knew not how to handle that matter. The negroes they left behind them I understand are sold and the money to the King’s use, and therefore I will not demand it of you. This I desire, that you will give me licence to sell 60 negroes only, towards the payment of my soldiers, to help to lighten the charges of this voyage, which was appointed to be made otherways and to none of these parts. If you see in the morning armed men aland let it nothing trouble you, for as you shall command they shall return aboard again. Shewing me this pleasure, you shall command anything I have.”

The Treasurer, far from being browbeaten, sent back a spirited reply to Hawkins’ letter, declaring that he was prepared to deal with any soldiers that should attempt to land at his town, that he himself had under his command troops just as good or better than Hawkins, and ending up by declaring that it were better for the English soldiers to be paid no wages than to receive the kind of payment they would get if they set foot on the King of Spain’s territory. Drake’s treatment of the Treasurer’s house had had its result, and now the gloves were off on both sides. Keeping to his threat, Hawkins went ashore at sunrise next morning at the head of his men, taking with him as an envoy a Spanish trader who had joined him at Borburata.

The Treasurer was also there with a body-guard of

twenty horsemen, but keeping out of the range of the invaders. He was well prepared for any trouble, having had strong fieldworks constructed, these being defended by a hundred or more arquebusiers. The envoy was sent forward under a flag of truce to interview the Treasurer, and to vouch for the good behaviour of Hawkins. This had no other effect on the Spaniard than to make him repeat that he utterly refused to grant any licence whatever to trade in the vicinity, so Hawkins gave the order to advance on the town, and after marching a quarter of a mile without opposition, the Englishmen were suddenly confronted by a company of about ninety Spanish arquebusiers who were reinforced by a large number of armed negroes and Indians.

A volley was fired by the enemy, but the range was too far and only two of the Englishmen were struck.

The order was at once given to charge, on which the Spaniards turned and fled towards the town, and the arquebusiers and their coloured allies all became mixed up in the rout, with the English at their heels. In this state they entered the town, but the Spaniards, seeing the place was already lost, escaped and hid in the surrounding jungle.

The Spanish mounted troops had not taken part in the fight, and the Treasurer, as soon as he perceived the fate of the town, sent a horseman under a white flag to say that even if the English had taken the town they should never trade with them, "for he would die in the field rather than grant him any licence."

To this Hawkins replied that if the licence was not granted at once, the town would be burnt to the ground. It happened that, without the General's orders, several of the inflammable houses had been set on fire by the English sailors, when word came from Don Miguel that should Hawkins set the whole Indies in flames he would never grant his licence. He added also that it mattered not

to him should the whole town be destroyed, knowing as he did that the King would rebuild it, and a better one at that, at his own cost.

Accompanying the lancer who brought his last message under the protection of "a white linen cloth on the top of his lance" came several Spaniards, anxious to see for themselves what damage actually had been done to their houses.

The Treasurer made a bad error in allowing these men to get in touch with Hawkins, who saw at once the advantageous opportunity this gave him. In his usual gracious style, he spoke to the Spaniards, who he knew were only too willing to do business with him. To them he pointed out that the Treasurer was not acting from purely loyal motives in promising that the King of Spain would pay to have their town rebuilt if it were burnt down. He more than hinted that the Treasurer was rather concerned with the filling of his own pockets than inclined to worry over the gains or losses of the townspeople. They must remember, too, that the Treasurer had already removed all his own property to safety, and probably he would charge the King treble the cost of rebuilding the town, most of which the Treasurer would keep for himself. Hawkins gave his solemn promise that he would, at his own expense, give full compensation for the houses already burnt. Finally he sent a message to Don Miguel saying that he would "seek him out in any place in the country and make him willing . . . to grant him licence to traffic with the inhabitants." With this Hawkins discharged the company, sending them away to undermine the authority and power of the stubborn Treasurer.

Negotiations between the two leaders were now at a standstill. On one side was Hawkins, holding the deserted town with his men, backed up by two falcons mounted on gun-carriages. On the other side the

rightful owners of the city hiding in the neighbouring woods, no doubt bringing every possible pressure to bear on the Treasurer to be reasonable.

The Treasurer was, all the same, in a very difficult position. Since Hawkins' last voyage, most emphatic orders had come from Spain that on no account whatever were the King's subjects to trade or have any hint of communication with the English. At least one Governor had been sent home a prisoner, to be tried for this offence in Spain.

Then there was a further reason for delaying the fleet as long as possible. If Hawkins' ships were really as short of water as he said, a time would come when he would be compelled to land his slaves, or sell them at some ridiculously low price, rather than have them die on board. So the stubborn yet spirited Treasurer hung on and waited.

During the lull, information reached the English which gave the leader cause for immediate action.

One night there arrived at Hawkins' headquarters a negro who had been captured by the troops as he was entering the town. On investigation he proved to be a runaway slave of the Treasurer, and had this interesting piece of news to impart. He stated that what he had to tell was only for the General's private ear, so they led him before Hawkins. To the English General he confided that he knew the exact spot where the Treasurer had hidden the valuables hurried out of the town when the English first appeared ; and he declared that if Hawkins would promise to take him away in his ship when he left, and restore him his liberty, he would show him the very place.

This was a piece of unlooked-for good fortune which Hawkins was not slow in seizing. That same night a party of 120 men, guided by the negro, set out, and, after marching about six miles, found the hidden treasure

and sent word back to Hawkins that all was well, also sending a Spanish prisoner they had caught on the way. Hawkins interviewed the prisoner, who assured him that they were all heartily tired of the Treasurer and his pig-headed ways, since he thought only of lining his own pockets, and would listen to no reasonable argument from any of them, who were, to a man, anxious to trade with Hawkins.

In the meanwhile two ox-waggons were procured, and Hawkins, at the head of a second well-armed party, marched off to bring back the treasure-trove. An immediate attempt was made by the Treasurer's troops to rescue their property, but they were easily driven off by the English soldiers, and the treasure was carried back, ready to be put into the ships. In spite of this, many of the Spaniards were become so well disposed to the English that friendships were being struck up between the two.

By some of these Spaniards Hawkins sent a further message to the much-harassed Treasurer, to say that if he did not very quickly grant the licence demanded, not only would he take away all the plunder, but would make things so unpleasant for him that soon he would be as eager to grant Hawkins a licence as Hawkins had been to crave one.

This was too much, even for the Treasurer, who was by no means a weak man. Surrounded as he was by a crowd of his own people, whose property was in imminent peril, all clamouring for him to be reasonable, with Hawkins threatening him with dire revenge, he at last capitulated. The position had become intolerable and there was nothing left for him but to give way.

Bitterly the defeated Treasurer turned to his people and told them "There is not one of you that knoweth John Hawkins. He is such a man that any man talking with him, hath no power to deny him anything he doth

request. This hath made me hitherto to do right well to keep myself far from him, and not any villainy that I know in him, but great nobility. And so do not desire me to do no such thing, for therein ye shall be in danger to prefer his desire before the commandment of my master the King."

Thus this brave and conscientious man had to confess defeat by one of a stronger will than his own ; and in doing so paid Hawkins the greatest compliment the English General ever received.

Now for the first time the two men met. Face to face, alone, in an open space in sight of their followers, they conversed and negotiated for a whole hour. What passed between them will never be known, but needless to say Hawkins came away the victor, with a secret licence to trade safely tucked away in his pocket.

The two leaders embraced publicly, which proclaimed to the onlookers that all was well. The goods in the two carts were returned to their lawful owners, and Hawkins paid full value for the houses that his men had destroyed, with a certain number of slaves. Trade at once became brisk, and in no time 150 slaves had been sold and paid for, and much European merchandise disposed of as well.

Nothing now was left to keep Hawkins and his fleet at Rio de la Hacha ; so, after presenting some handsome gifts to the Treasurer, they weighed and sailed away.

The whole of this affair was typical of Hawkins. Ruthless in getting his own way, yet he was always patient and, according to his own standard, honest. As far as we know, he never took any Spanish or Portuguese property without paying something for it. Also he never traded without securing a licence to do so, however much we may question the means and methods by which he procured that document ; for we must bear in mind that he, who was on the spot and understood

the situation, considered these documents of vital importance, though to us they appear somewhat futile. Probably it was with an eye to the future, for he must have known that when he returned to England the Spanish Ambassador would stir up all kinds of trouble, and send protests and reports to his Government about Hawkins and his filibustering methods.

He knew, too, that the Queen and her counsellors would all be on his side, if they could be so with any reasonable excuse. What better evidence could he bring forward of his good faith than a series of documents, all in good order, and signed and sealed by the Governors of each Spanish port at which he had trafficked, showing that he had their licence to trade.

Since these pages were written, Miss Irene Wright has published a most valuable collection of documents, the result of several years' delving amongst the Archives of the Indies at Seville. All these have to do with John Hawkins and his transactions with the Governors of the various settlements he visited on the Spanish Main. They are of very great interest, as they give us the story of the English visits from the other point of view. It is interesting, for this reason, to read what the Spaniards of Rio de la Hacha wrote to the King of Spain about the whole affair. Naturally they exaggerated certain incidents and minimized others, but between the two accounts we get a very clear picture of what really did take place. This document is of such value and interest that we may be excused for reprinting it in its entirety.

The document is dated, Rio de la Hacha, September 26th, 1568, and addressed to his Royal Catholic Majesty :

“ On June 10th last John Hawkins, English corsair, arrived off this port with ten warships, all well armed, and supplied with artillery and fireworks and many other weapons and equipment suitable to so powerful an

armada as his. He carried more than six hundred men very well armed and outfitted with corselets and arquebuses and pikes and crossbows and halberds and all other weapons that could be carried, suitable to attack. In good order they landed next day, about noon, half a league from this city. Their pinnaces and ships played many guns, for which reason Miguel de Castellanos, your majesty's general in command, was unable to prevent them from landing.

“ He went out to encounter them with as many as sixty men, whom he had succeeded in assembling, and with this, the small force he had, he offered as fine and valorous a defence as has ever been made in these Indies, and killed more than thirty of the enemy. He rendered such signal service that all were astonished at his great valour (both his adversaries and also the residents), for certainly it was a business that to-day, on looking back at it, fills with fright those who were present and those who hear it related.

“ In good order he withdrew with his small force, without losing a man, whereas truly it seemed incredible that any should have escaped, and the English general took the town.

“ Indignant to discover that your majesty's commander should have undertaken with so few soldiers to prevent him from taking it, and because certain gentlemen whom he much esteemed had been killed, he set fire to the town and burned nearly two-thirds of it and blew up the government house.

“ This done, he began next day to march inland in very good order, his field-pieces in advance. Observing this, your majesty's general summoned what force he could and took up a position ahead of him, to prevent his advance in so far as possible, burning what houses were in the country and driving off the stock, that the enemy might not obtain possession of it.

“ In doing this your majesty’s general performed many valorous deeds and killed some of the enemy’s men, seeing which the English general determined to return to town from the point at which he had arrived, which was more than a league from the city. He retired in the same good order in which he had advanced. His intention was to march again into the interior at night, since he could not accomplish his purpose by day.

“ He dared to venture this because he had possession of a mulatto and a negro, slaves of your majesty’s general, who deserted to him and, that he might liberate them, offered to lead him to the place where your majesty’s treasure-box was buried and where most of the people of this city were, with their goods.

“ With this in view they set out at midnight with these guides, and three hours before dawn arrived where your majesty’s general had a tent with much property and where the said citizens were with their goods. The enemy captured a married man with his wife and children and other burghers and took all the goods and negroes which were there.

“ The enemy having captured this booty, the burghers of the city and persons whom the Englishman had captured sent one of their number to your majesty’s general that he might ransom them and their goods, for the Englishman had told them unless they were ransomed he would kill them and carry off all that he had taken from them. He repeated this threat often, and truly it inspired great pity to see them so afflicted and in such danger.

“ Seeing this, your majesty’s general, moved by his great commiseration for the said burghers, resolved to ransom them from the Englishman, that he might not carry out his cruel threat, and so they and all their goods and the houses of the town which remained unburned, were ransomed for 4000 pesos in gold.

“ Among those ransomed were the said mulatto and the negro who had deserted to the enemy, for whom, had nothing else been redeemed, the said 4000 pesos would have been given, that they might be brought to justice. The English captain delivered them to your majesty’s general, Miguel de Castellanos, and although they were his property, your majesty’s general handed them over to the law that they might be punished according to it and so the mulatto was hung and the negro quartered.

“ When he had received the ransom, rather than throw them overboard the next day the Englishman landed in this city as many as seventy-five head of slaves who were dying on his hands. They were old men and infants at their mothers’ breasts, and among them all there was not a slave worth anything at all. He said he left them in recompense for the damage done. Seeing this, your majesty’s general and the undersigned determined to take them over in your majesty’s name and so they were placed in charge of a certain person that he might feed them and put them into condition, and most of them were auctioned, as the rest will be also, and the proceeds will be placed in your majesty’s royal treasury pending your majesty’s pleasure to order what shall be done with the money.

“ We entreat your majesty to remedy the grievous conditions prevailing to-day in the Indies. For every two ships that come hither from Spain, twenty corsairs appear. For this reason not a town on all this coast is safe, for whenever they please to do so they take and plunder these settlements. They go so far as to boast that they are lords of the sea and of the land, and as a matter of fact daily we see them seize ships, both those of the Indies trade and also some that come home from Spain itself. They capture towns, and this so commonly that we see it happen every year. Unless your majesty deign to favour all this coast by remedying the

situation, all these settlements must necessarily be abandoned, from which will result grave detriment to your majesty's royal patrimony and an end will be put to inter-Indies traffic ; trade with the Canaries will suffer, as will also those ships which come out of Spain between fleets.

“ God, Our Lord, preserve the exalted and very powerful person of your majesty and grant your majesty prosperity through many years and increase your majesty's kingdoms and dominions as we, your majesty's loyal servitors, desire.

“ Rio de la Hacha. September 26th, 1568.

“ Your royal Catholic majesty's humble servants  
who kiss your majesty's royal feet.

“ LAZARO DE VALLEJO ALDRETE.

“ HERNANDO COSTILLO (Rubrics).”

Which of these two narratives is the true one, it is impossible to say. Probably both were written with an eye to the future, one for the English Queen, the other for the King of Spain.

No doubt the Spanish account of the gallant defence of the town by the sixty heroes is a wild exaggeration, and so is the statement that more than thirty Englishmen were slain.

The thing which is most disturbing to the English reader, if it be true, is the story of the negro who, after confiding in Hawkins, was treacherously handed back to the Governor to be drawn and quartered.

It was early July by the time the business at Rio de la Hacha was concluded, and there was not much more merchandise, human or otherwise, to dispose of. The next port of call was to be a small settlement, Santa Marta, on the coast of what is to-day the Republic of Colombia, a small fortified outpost of the Spanish Empire, consisting of only forty-five houses, surrounded by a stockade.



Qui tricit fectis ins-tructis clasibus hostis  
ILLE VICTORIS HAWKINS primam reliquit in Indis

SIR JOHN HAWKINS

*From the print in Hollands Herwologa, 1620*

This defence was necessary because the neighbouring Indians were known to be warlike and hostile to the Spaniards.

Hawkins, on his arrival at nightfall, could not wait until next morning before sending his accustomed plea to the Governor for permission and licence to trade. Evidently he had written the letter beforehand, as, the moment the anchor was dropped, a messenger was sent ashore with this document. It was couched in the usual terms, offering the usual reasons or excuses for the visit and asking leave to trade.

In the case of such a weakly defended position Hawkins could, of course, have resorted to force at once ; but that was never his method of approach. The Governor sent back his answer next morning ; he had read between the lines of the English adventurer's letter, and made it perfectly clear that he knew how to act in such a case. To resist was obviously out of the question. But some thousands of miles away across the Atlantic were certain unsympathetic authorities who had an unpleasant knack of coming down with a heavy hand on their servants who disobeyed the imperial orders.

A pretty piece of play-acting was devised. Next morning, after breakfast, Hawkins was to make a sham attack on the town, and after sufficient display of resistance the Governor was to capitulate and grant a licence under protest.

The performance of this comedy opened punctually as arranged. Hawkins, in full armour, landed at the head of 150 armed men, to the accompaniment of an orchestra consisting of the guns of the fleet, which bombarded, not the town, but the jungle beyond it. Marching steadily onwards, headed by the General, the little army " stormed " and took the town, not halting until the market-place was reached. Suddenly a Spaniard is seen approaching, carrying a flag of truce. The

army halts, signals are waved to the fleet to cease the “bombardment.” The messenger arrives and hands his note to Hawkins. It is from the Governor. What can it contain? Hawkins breaks the seal and reads in it that His Excellency the Governor is “waiting at the other end of the town to speak with his worship.”

His Excellency and His Worship very quickly come to an agreement, and the precious licence is handed over. Traffic begins at once, and business is brisk. It is recorded that there was great banqueting on shore and aboard, between the Spaniards and the English, and “We had here fresh victuals as beef all the time we were here, and trafiqued very friendly together and sold about 110 negros with certain other wares.”

Hawkins, never forgetful of a deed of kindness—or was it a bribe?—“gave the Governor divers gifts for his friendship,” and sailed for Cartagena towards the end of the month, arriving at that strongly fortified city on August 1st. This visit did not turn out a success. The arrival of the fleet of nine ships, headed by the two English warships, should have impressed the Spaniards, as should also the thunderous salute which was fired as the ships passed the fort. The usual letter was despatched to the Governor, but he refused even to open it.

Now this was not playing the game at all on the Governor’s part, for it only left Hawkins the choice of two moves: one force, the other ignominious retreat. The first was out of the question. Hawkins had not more than about 350 men at the most, while he knew the town to be strongly defended by 500 Spanish infantry, as well as by numerous horsemen, and upwards of 6000 armed and trained Indians.

It would have been sheer madness to attack under these circumstances. Another factor to be considered was that the season of storms was due, “the which they call Furicanos,” so the sooner they got out of the Carib-

bean Sea the better. Hawkins dropped a few shots here and there about the town, but this uncertain threat led to nothing. While doing this he despatched several pinnaces to hunt for provisions amongst the islands in the bay. On one of these they found a pleasure-garden laid out by some wealthy Cartagenan. Hidden in a kind of grotto the sailors discovered many *botijos* of wine, and other goods which would have proved welcome ; but Hawkins refused to touch them. The caretaker of these stores reported this to the Spanish owners, who sent word to Hawkins that he was welcome to take anything that he desired. In response to this invitation Hawkins carried on board what he wanted, leaving in exchange a supply of good English cloth, " having also in all places ever since he came out of England paid every man for anything he took to his content to the uttermost, as also custom to the King in all places of the India."

Hawkins' luck was out at Cartagena, and there was nothing left for him but to pocket his pride and sail away. Fortune, which so far had smiled, now deserted him. From this time onwards all went wrong with the expedition.



## CHAPTER IV

## DISASTER



ON August 8th the Admiral weighed anchor and said farewell to unfriendly Cartagena. The venture had up till now been a most profitable one; they had taken on board the "Jesus," where all the valuables were stored, 29,000 pesos of gold in exchange for slaves and other wares, roughly £13,500. Three-quarters of the sum was in actual gold, the rest in pearls and silver. The slaves were by far the most valuable and most easily disposed of part of their merchandise, but the expenses were heavy, a good round sum having to be set aside in payment for each slave sold, and also there had to be taken into consideration the far from inconsiderable bribe which every Spanish Governor expected as his perquisite before any business could be transacted. Even then, the price which the Spanish settlers paid Hawkins for his slaves must have been a great deal lower than that which they had to pay for the same article when imported through the usual and regular channels of the licensed monopolists.

Disappointed at this want of success at Cartagena the fleet departed, but for the first two days lay becalmed. Hawkins occupied this time of involuntary idleness in taking all the cargo out of the caravel he had acquired at Cape Blanco, and sinking her. The French Captain who had volunteered to serve and sail with Hawkins at Cape

Verde claimed his discharge, and was permitted to sail off on his own account, with his French crew.

The other French Captain, Bland, still in command of his caravel the "Gratia Dei," elected to remain with Hawkins.

With the loss of these two vessels, one sunk and the other gone, the fleet was reduced to seven, when they steered to the north with the intention of leaving the Caribbean Sea by way of the Yucatan and Florida Channels.

Passing off Cape San Antonio, the western point of Cuba, they met with a hurricane so violent that they had no choice but to run before it, at the risk of shipwreck on the dangerous Florida coast. On the third day of the storm they parted company with the "William and John," which was not seen again and was given up for lost, though actually she managed to escape through the Straits of Florida and reached the coast of Ireland the following February. By this time everybody on board the "Jesus" was becoming alarmed at her condition. She seemed in peril of falling to pieces at any moment. At her stern, on either side of her stern-post, the planks kept opening and shutting with every sea, and many of the leaks were big enough to allow a man to pass his arm through. Indeed, so flooded had the hull become that living fish were seen swimming about. In this dreadful plight, Hawkins did everything possible to save the ship, stopping the leaks with cloth, keeping the men working day and night at the pumps, and cutting away much of the upper works which were tending to tear the hull to pieces. By these efforts the ship was saved, and when the storm had blown itself out the fleet was in the shallow sea off the coast of Florida, and a search began for a suitable haven in which the ships, particularly the "Jesus," could be repaired and refitted.

Many of the company were surprised that their Admiral did not transfer the valuable cargo out of the "Jesus" into one or other of the ships and sink the worn-out vessel. There was good reason for doing this, for first of all she was by now quite unseaworthy, and secondly, by the contract drawn up between Queen Elizabeth and the adventurers who were financing the expedition, it was agreed that, should either of the two Royal ships be lost at sea, the loss should be borne by the Queen, while on the other hand, all damage that was found to have occurred on either vessel after their return was to be made good by the syndicate. But Hawkins, though a hard-headed man of business, was something more than that. He was a patriot, a seaman, and a loyal subject as well. He would rather bring home his ship and pay for doing so than lose the vessel entrusted to him by his Sovereign.

The more one learns of the personality of John Hawkins, the more is it brought home to one how downright honest he was. This honesty appears time and again. His methods often savour of the filibuster, but are merely in accordance with the manners of the age ; and, in spite of what was afterwards said by his rivals and enemies to the contrary, no act of dishonesty can be brought against him. This is all the more remarkable and praiseworthy when we consider his responsibilities later on, when, as Controller of the Royal Navy, he had innumerable opportunities of feathering his own nest at a time when public officers were expected to make what they could of their opportunities while they lasted.

The lull in the storm which drove the fleet off the coast of Florida lasted only a few days when a fresh gale sprang up from the north-west, driving them into the Gulf of Mexico.

This was an unknown sea to English mariners, and was "the first occasion on which English keels had

furrowed the waters of the Bay of Mexico." The Spaniards had taken care that as little information as possible should leak out about the geography and navigation of this huge uncharted sea. Hawkins had no pilot on any of his ships who had ever sailed in the Gulf, and no accurate maps to guide him to a port of safety. It was impossible for the "Jesus" to keep afloat much longer, unless she could be brought to harbour and thoroughly overhauled. The other vessels were not in a much better condition. On September 11th a sail was sighted, the first for many a long day. Orders were given to give chase, and the smaller and swifter ships soon overtook her.

She proved to be a Spanish boat, carrying a cargo of wines of the country, and the Captain was brought on board the flagship to be cross-examined by the Admiral.

It was learned from him that they were sailing from Campache, where they had taken shelter during the late storm, and were now running for San Juan de Ulua, which was famous as the best port in the whole of the Gulf. Here they expected to find a good market for their cargo. The Spanish Captain had another piece of news which caused Hawkins considerable anxiety.

It seemed that a large Spanish fleet, the annual armada, with goods of all kinds from Spain, was now on its way from Europe to San Juan de Ulua, where the collection of gold, silver and other valuables was put into the empty galleons to be shipped back to Spain. These vessels were very heavily armed and would make a formidable foe at the best of times, and Hawkins knew only too well that his fleet, in its present battered state, was in no condition to fight. Apparently the Spanish fleet was due in port towards the end of the month. However, there was nothing else to be done than to sail for San Juan de Ulua and hope for some turn of fortune to save the English, for in answer to Hawkins' inquiries if

there was not some other port he could go to, the Spaniard told him that, with the present prevailing wind, San Juan was the only port he could possibly make. Since there was no choice in the matter, the fleet set out, with the Spanish bark to pilot them, and after sailing four days they arrived on September 15th in sight of the harbour. Anchoring there, they picked up three more small Spanish craft, one of which was on her way to Hispaniola with important despatches. Hawkins gathered each of these into his fleet, not wishing that news of his approach should precede him at the port.

Next day, as the fleet drew near the mouth of the harbour, a boat was seen coming out to meet them. Hawkins, who instantly suspected what was afoot, ordered all the flags of St. George's Cross to be lowered, and hoisted instead the flag with the Queen's Arms, on the maintop of the "Jesus," and foretop of the "Minion." This was done to deceive the occupants of the small boat until they were close enough to the fleet to be captured. Plainly, the Spaniards had not as yet suspected the identity of the newcomers, imagining the fleet to be the Spanish one which was daily expected.

The St. George's Cross would be easily recognized from a distance, and would so have informed the whole town to what nation they belonged. The two flags which they were now flying "were so dimmed in colour through exposure in foul weather that they never perceived the lions and flower de lutes till they"—in the boat—"were hard aboard the Jesus."

The principal persons in the boat, which had come a league from the port to bid a polite welcome to the fleet, must have received a rude shock when first they made out the lions and fleurs-de-lis on the faded flags. They must have been still more uncomfortable when they found themselves being addressed from the high bulwarks of the "Jesus" in Spanish, spoken with a Devon

accent. Lastly to find themselves, not as they expected, on the deck of His Catholic Majesty's flagship, but on that of his Heretic Cousin Elizabeth, Queen of England.

There were two important persons who had come out from San Juan de Ulua to honour the approaching fleet : the King's Treasurer, and the *teniente* or Deputy-Governor of Vera Cruz. Hawkins received them on board his ship with the greatest courtesy.

Their unlooked-for visitors were doubly welcome on board the flagship which was leading the fleet towards the entrance of the harbour. The Spaniards on the lookout in the harbour suspected nothing wrong and, indeed, so sure were they of its being the Spanish Plate fleet that the sixteen guns of the fort guarding the narrow entrance to the port fired salvos in their honour as the ships glided past.

It was not until the last English vessel was safely in the harbour that the people on shore realized their mistake. A panic took place, every man scrambling to get to the mainland from the island opposite, which formed the harbour. This island was a mere spit of low-lying sand, scarcely a foot above high-water mark, and some 200 yards in length. The prevailing northerly gales, blowing across this exposed anchorage, made it necessary to tie up the ships to the island, along the land-side of which were strong iron chains fitted for this purpose. To each of these chains a ship could be attached with her bows overhanging the shore.

The town of Vera Cruz, for which this was the only port, lay fifteen miles to the north-west and, though it afforded poor shelter, it was the best that could be found along the coast for many leagues.

San Juan de Ulua was itself a miserable spot, being merely a collection of huts sheltering the gangs of negro slaves who looked after the port and acted as stevedores to load the ships. A chapel and a battery, which defended

the narrow entrance between the island and the opposite part of the mainland, were the only other buildings.

Except during the season when the annual fleet from Spain was due, and until it left with the year's workings from the Mexican silver mines, the port was practically deserted. The climate was too unhealthy for Europeans, and all the Spanish colonists lived at Vera Cruz, which was in direct communication with the interior of the country.

On entering the harbour Hawkins found eight Spanish ships lying there unrigged, their crews being occupied on the island. They were reported to contain silver to the value of £200,000, ready to be shipped to Spain. This was a prize well worth taking, but Hawkins resisted the temptation. The first thing to be done was to reassure the panic-stricken Spaniards. With this end in view Hawkins sent word to the Captain of the island, one Delgadillo, that he meant them no harm of any kind, for he did not intend to take a pennyworth of their gold or silver, but only needed victuals for which he would pay, and opportunity for repairing his damaged ships. The Captain of one of the small ships he had seized on the way, named Maldonado, offered to carry a letter from Hawkins to the Royal Council at Mexico City, which lay twenty leagues away, so that he could explain both his position and the reason for wishing to remain for a while at the port.

This Maldonado played false, for after receiving the letter he went away and remained in hiding, so that, instead of the Council at Mexico getting first news of the English fleet's arrival from Hawkins, they got what was probably a very different account from the Governor at Vera Cruz. In the meantime matters appeared to be going smoothly enough. The Spaniards were satisfied at Hawkins' pacific intention, still more so since he had liberated all his unwilling hostages with the exception

of the Treasurer, whom he wisely held as a useful pawn in case of future trouble.

Next morning, Friday, an unlucky day, opened with an unpleasant surprise. At sunrise the lookout reported the approach of thirteen ships. To many of the English seamen, subject to superstition as they were, these thirteen ships arriving on a Friday must have seemed an ill omen. As matters turned out, their forebodings were justified. Hawkins inquired of the Treasurer what these ships could be, though he knew only too well that they could be none other than the Plate fleet expected from Seville. The position had suddenly become acute.

Not so long since, a Spanish fleet had put into Plymouth harbour and, for disrespect shown by failing to salute the Queen's ships, had received pretty short commons from Hawkins. The English Admiral had not forgotten the incident, and he must have felt quite sure the proud Hidalgos had also not forgotten the humiliation that the English Admiral had forced upon them.

And now the fleet of King Philip of Spain, arriving after a long and wearisome voyage, found itself shut out of its own port, by, of all people, the self-same "Achines de Plimua," the English Corsair, Heretic and Pirate.

What was to be done? No time must be lost, for if once the Spaniards were allowed in they would make very short work of the intruders. True, it would be easy to prevent this, for there was only the one narrow entrance deep enough to allow ships of such draught to pass, and Hawkins had had the foresight to protect this by a battery of guns landed from his ships, which were already mounted in position to strengthen the Spanish battery which his men now manned. But, if he did keep them out, what then? The fleet could not be left to anchor quietly outside, waiting for the first north-westerly gale to come and dash it to pieces on the

coast. There was no other port they could run to for shelter. This solution of the difficulty by inevitable shipwreck might save Hawkins and his ships and crews for the time being, but the consequences would indubitably be fatal. Hawkins could imagine how it would go with him when he returned to England, with news of such doings already there before him. The whole might and wrath of the King of Spain and his Government would demand retribution from the Queen of England. There would be no alternative ; either Hawkins would be punished or else it would be war with Spain. England was not yet nearly ready for the struggle, though she might, and did, recognize that war was inevitable. She had many strenuous years of preparation ahead of her before she could hope to stand up against the power of the colossus. Hawkins realized that it would be the end of all his ambitions, and possibly also of his life, by way of the scaffold, if he kept the Spanish fleet out of San Juan de Ulua, at the mercy of the first hurricane that blew.

He had no choice but to let the fleet come in and trust to the Spaniards' honour not to turn on him. The risk was great, but he took it "fearing the Queen's indigation in so weighty a matter." Alvarez de Bacan commanded the fleet, and he carried an important passenger ; none other than Don Martin Enriquez, who had been sent out as Viceroy of Mexico in place of the present one.

Hawkins decided to try and make as good a bargain as he could with de Bacan. This was not a difficult matter seeing he held all the cards : he was in the harbour and de Bacan was outside. The trouble was to strike a bargain to which the Spaniards would adhere.

He sent out Captain Delgadillo, to inform the Spanish Commander that he could not enter until he had given certain promises, that no attack should be made on the

English, and that they should be unmolested and allowed to repair their ships and buy necessary victuals. The new Viceroy was indignant and, sweeping aside de Bacan, took upon himself to declare that with his thousand men he would enter in spite of Hawkins and his orders.

For three whole days messengers rowed to and fro between the rival Commanders, and by September 20th an agreement was reached. Both sides solemnly promised to abstain from hostilities while Hawkins repaired his ships and bought victuals. Also he was to hold the island and the batteries on it, while Don Martin promised that no armed Spaniards should land upon the island until the English fleet had departed. These conditions were put into writing and signed and sealed by the Viceroy, while ten hostages were exchanged as evidence of good faith. These hostages were to be gentlemen, but it was not long before it became evident that the Spanish hostages were only "verlets" dressed up in fine clothes. This was the first act of Spanish treachery. It was not until the 21st that the wind became favourable for the Spanish fleet to enter the harbour; but already Don Martin had broken his oath. Already he had sent to Vera Cruz for every available soldier to be armed and sent to San Juan under cover of darkness.

On Tuesday, September 21st, with flags flying and trumpets blowing, salutes firing "as the manner of the sea doth require," the armada crept through the narrows. It took two days to sort out and berth all the thirty-four ships, Spanish and English, against the island. Next to the first Spanish ship lay the "Minion"; next to her the "Jesus." Between the "Minion" and the first Spanish ship lay a large empty Spanish hulk, of 700 tons.

The treacherous Don Martin lost no time in preparing for the surprise for which he was working. Secretly he filled the empty hulk with soldiers, cutting fresh port-

holes in her side through which to bring extra guns to play on the "Minion" when the hour came. The soldiers that had come from Vera Cruz he hid in the fo'c'sles where they could wait unseen, ready to spring ashore and seize the batteries when the signal was given.

In the meantime more and more unarmed Spaniards of all ranks landed on the little island, to stretch their legs after weeks on board ship. The sailors of the two nations soon became friendly ; perhaps, as afterwards turned out, too much so. Preparations for the betrayal were also taking place on shore. Don Enriquez and Admiral de Bacan had landed, and with the Governor of San Juan were forming plans to surprise and destroy the detested English and their ships.

Although these preparations, on shore and in the ships, were carried out as quietly as possible, the ever alert Hawkins had a strong suspicion that mischief was brewing. Particularly he was suspicious of the extra men put on board the hulk, and he warned Hampton, the captain of the "Minion," which lay next to the Spanish hulk, to be on his guard. He also sent Robert Barrett, the Master of the "Jesus," who spoke fluent Spanish, to protest to Don Martin. The Viceroy's answer was to seize Barrett and his crew and make them prisoners, and then to give the prearranged signal for the attack by a trumpet blast and the waving of a white flag. This was on Thursday morning, September 23rd, at 8 o'clock. Hawkins and his officers were dining in the great cabin on the "Jesus," when they heard the trumpet, followed by a terrific uproar of cannons firing and men shouting, and at once realized that the Spanish Viceroy had played them false. Dining at Hawkins' table was Señor Augustin de Villa Nueva. As everybody jumped up to see what was afoot, Villa Nueva was detected by one John Chamberleyne in the act of drawing a dagger from his sleeve. He was not killed out of

hand as he deserved, but, by Hawkins' orders, arrested and locked up in the stewards' room under guard of two men.

Rushing up on deck, Hawkins found everything in confusion. The island swarmed with armed Spanish soldiers, and most of the Englishmen there were already butchered. None escaped but three who managed to swim to the "Jesus." The battery of eleven guns that Hawkins had set up to command the entrance was already in the enemy's hands, and was turned on the English hulls. The "Minion" had been boarded by the troops hidden in the Spanish hulk, and every Spanish gun that could be brought to bear was pumping shot into the English ships.

The island formed the key to the whole situation : some one then had blundered. The identity of the officer who allowed himself to be caught napping will never be known. Neither Hawkins nor any other survivor ever told his name.

Simultaneously with the attack on the island, the enemy had hauled the hulk in which large numbers of soldiers had been hidden close alongside the "Minion." As Hawkins reached the deck of the "Jesus" he saw below him swarms of armed men crowding over the bulwarks of the "Minion." In another moment she would have been lost. With a rallying shout of "God and St. George ! Upon these traitorous villains," Hawkins leaped down on to the deck of the "Minion," followed by his men, and after a severe hand-to-hand fight drove the Spaniards back to the hulk, or else over the side into the sea.

While this action was in progress, three other vessels had worked round alongside the "Jesus" and attempted to board her. Back sprang Hawkins and soon he had cleared her decks of the enemy.

Hawkins recognized that with the loss of the island

the key to the whole situation was gone. Nevertheless, though the situation was desperate, no question of surrender or capitulation crossed his mind. Indeed, if it had, he knew that to expect any pity or mercy of the treacherous enemy would be folly : the only thing left was to fight on and hope that fortune would turn before it was too late.

He knew he had behind him as brave a lot of men as any commander could wish for, and that they would fight as long as he was spared to lead them. Rapidly Hawkins gave the order to cut the head cables that held the "Jesus" and the "Minion" to the island, and to haul them off by the stern-fasts. This brought the two ships clear of the craft immediately surrounding them, and he was able to fire broadside after broadside into the Spanish vessels. English naval gunnery was already vastly superior to the Spanish, as it proved to be years later on at the time of the Armada. By pouring in shot after shot at almost point-blank range, they soon had the two biggest warships, the "Capitena" or "Admiral," and the "Almirata" or "Vice-admiral," in difficulties. A violent explosion took place on the "Vice-admiral," followed by a fire which burnt her to the water's edge. The flagship herself, the mighty "Capitena," could stand it no longer ; her firing became weaker, she settled and then sank, but owing to the shallowness of the harbour she did not disappear. Those of the crew who had escaped death or wounds were seen throwing themselves into the sea and making for the shore. Her flag still fluttered and was never struck.

Don Martin Enriquez remained alone on board, refusing to strike his flag or to leave his ship. Dishonoured as his name will ever be, yet this brave act should be remembered as the one bright star in the darkness of his treachery.

Within an hour the whole Spanish fleet was fought

to a standstill, and beaten into silence. This success had been dearly bought by the English. True, they had succeeded by sheer pluck in averting an overwhelming catastrophe, but their position was still about as desperate as could be.

Although the guns in the Spanish warships were silenced, this was not so with the batteries on the island. These, of some twenty guns in all, were keeping a steady fire at very short range on the English ships.

Many a crew would have flinched before such a raking fire, but Hawkins rallied his men, and kept up their fighting spirit.

Job Hortop, the gunner in the "Jesus," tells us in his journal that she was being "wonderfully pierced with shot," during which process "our general courageously cheered up his soldiers and gunners, and called to Samuel his page for a cup of beer, who brought it him in a silver cup, and he, drinking to all men, willed the gunners to stand by their ordnance lustily like men. He had no sooner set the cup out of his hand, but a demi-culverin shot, struck away the cup and a cooper's plane that stood by the mainmast, and ran out on the other side of the ship, which nothing dismayed our general, for he ceased not to encourage us, saying 'Fear nothing ! for God, who hath preserved me from this shot, will also deliver us from these traitors and villains.' "

The bombardment from the island was becoming unbearable, although the casualties amongst the Spaniards must have been heavy, since they had no cover from the guns and bows which shot down at them from the decks of the English ships. One of the two batteries was now in the personal command of Don Francisco de Luxan, the Admiral of the Spanish fleet. When an Admiral takes over the command of a shore battery, there is a strong presumption that he no longer has a fleet nor a ship to command. The other battery was in charge of

Delgadillo, Captain of the island at the time the English arrived at San Juan.

The terrible cannonade continued without a pause. At last it became impossible to withstand it any longer. The "Angel" was sunk, and the crew of the "Swallow" had to abandon their ship. The "Minion" was so cut about that she was forced to withdraw out of range, as did also the "Judith," Drake's ship. This was the position in the afternoon after the battle had raged for several hours. The "Jesus" herself was now the target for all the guns on the island and she was becoming riddled with shot holes, and her rigging torn, as she lay sorely damaged but still fighting back.

One of the heroes of this epic fight, where all were heroes, was the Frenchman, Captain Bland, of the little "Gratia Dei." Seeing that his ship must soon inevitably be lost, and his men also, he determined on a desperate course. Cutting his cables he pushed out into the harbour meaning to work his battered craft in amongst the Spanish ships, and then to set fire to the "Gratia Dei," with the object of using her as a fire-ship to destroy or damage the already disorganized fleet. Just as he was drawing near a chain-shot brought down his mainmast, thus making his ship an unmanageable and complete cripple, and he had to hurry his men out of her and get them aboard the "Jesus."

Hawkins now had to decide on his best course of action. The Spanish fleet, though far greater than his own, was already mastered. But the guns on the island he could not deal with, and they were steadily pumping death and destruction into his ships. The only thing to do was to endeavour to escape while there was still a chance. Only two ships were left which could, in the widest sense, be described as seaworthy. They were the "Minion" and the little "Judith." On board the "Jesus" was the great treasure which at any cost must

not be left to the treacherous enemy. Even after seven hours of desperate fighting, Hawkins' hold on his crew was such that he managed to get his sailors to work the "Jesus" until she acted as a partial screen for the "Minion" from the hellish and never-ceasing bombardment from the island batteries.

As quickly as possible the treasure from the "Jesus," the gold, silver and pearls, was transported from the larger to the smaller ship. The Spaniards, perceiving the object of this action, redoubled their efforts. Suddenly a new menace appeared. Two Spanish vessels, set on fire to act as fire-ships, were seen drifting down wind, in flames, towards the "Jesus" and the "Minion." This was the last straw for the exhausted men. They had fought against the greatest odds one whole tropic day : eight hours without drink or rest or respite. Wild panic seized the crew of the "Jesus" who rushed madly on-board the "Minion," in spite of the desperate efforts of their officers to check the stampede. Those on the "Minion," without orders, cut her adrift. The ships were thus separated, and one of the last to jump from the "Jesus" to the "Minion" was John Hawkins.

How much of the treasure was rescued one cannot say, but there is little doubt that a very considerable proportion of it was saved. Before the Admiralty Court, held in London a year later, Hawkins gave the following evidence :

"This deponent," he said, "perceiving fear of his men and the imminent danger that they stood in, for safeguard of themselves leapt into the 'Minion' out of the said 'Jesus,' where into he was very hardly received, for in that instant was she under sail and departing from on board the 'Jesus.'"

Another deponent at the same court, Jean Turren, a French trumpeter, stated "the said John Hawkins, the Captain and general, tarried so long upon board that

said 'Jesus,' for the better defence and safety thereof, that he was almost left behind, and hardly came to the 'Minion,' which was then in shifting to loose and withdraw herself."

This evidence bears out, what is to be expected of such a man, that not until all was lost would he consent to desert his ship.

The unequal fight was now over ; the "Minion" drew away out of range of the guns and lay at anchor for the night. Although several Spanish ships were still left in good trim for fighting, they were not in the mood for more rough handling from the wounded lion.

Drake took the "Judith" through the narrows with orders from Hawkins to anchor outside the harbour and wait there until he should join him.

When Hawkins looked for him next morning, lo and behold, no "Judith" was to be seen ! She had disappeared in the night. For two days the "Minion" lay there, the crews busily repairing the rigging and hull, and still no sign of the "Judith." Apparently Drake had gone straight away, leaving Hawkins in the lurch, a mystery which has never been solved. Hawkins wrote "so with the 'Minion' only and the 'Judith' (a small bark of 50 tons) we escaped, which bark the same night forsook us in our great misery."

This was much for Hawkins to say, as he was remarkable for his reluctance in speaking ill of his officers. In fact, it is notable that not once in the whole of Hawkins' account of this voyage is the name of Francis Drake mentioned. The reason for this apparent desertion on the part of Drake, as also his actions after his departure, are not known to this day. He has been blamed for deserting his patron and relative in the hour of need. There are several points about the affair which are baffling.

Drake's voyage to England took four months, when it might have been done in one, in such a fast sailer as the "Judith" is known to have been. What was he doing all that while? True, he was only twenty-six years of age ; and, from what we know of his career afterwards, he would be quite equal to undertaking some enterprise on his own account when he could get a chance. If this was so, there remains no record of it. It would be unfair to charge Drake with deliberate desertion : it would seem impossible in the man who never showed the white feather in all his career. Certainly, it was commonly said at the time that he had deserted Hawkins. Even twenty years later William Borough, whom Drake arrested during the Cadiz expedition on the charge of mutiny and desertion, remarks in his defence : "Sir Francis Drake doth altogether forget how he demeaned himself towards his master and Admiral Mr. John Hawkins, at the port of San Juan de Ulua in the West Indies, when, contrary to his admiral's command, he came away and left his said master in great extremity."

Anyhow, Drake and the "Judith" were gone, and Hawkins on that September morning, in 1568, found himself alone, in the badly damaged "Minion," with some 200 men on board, many of whom were wounded. What was he to do? Under the most favourable circumstances the voyage home would have taken at least four weeks, probably six. He had not enough water and victuals to last such a large company for more than a week or two, nor was there anywhere he could go to replenish his supplies. After lingering for two days off the port, he sailed northwards up the Mexican coast, until, a fortnight later, faced with starvation, he called a meeting of his crew. Everything eatable had been devoured, even the ship's pets, dogs, cats, monkeys and parrots ; indeed, rats changed hands for large sums, to be turned into food. Some of the men were driven by

hunger to stew portions of the hides which were part of the cargo. The season of the northerly gales had set in and it would be madness to linger on this dangerous coast. No harbour or bay could be found where a safe landing was possible, or where the ship could be careened and repaired. Calling all hands on deck, Hawkins put the situation bluntly before them. On board, he told them, were 200 men : to sail eastward with this large company spelled death for them all by starvation. If one hundred left the ship there was a good chance of the remainder reaching home, and he promised them, on his word of honour, that once back at Plymouth he would do his utmost to send help to those who were left behind. Some were for going back to San Juan to surrender to the Spaniards, trusting to the vain hope for fair treatment. Others elected to be put ashore to take their chances with the native tribes, while some were for staying by the ship.

Put to the vote, about equal numbers elected to stop on board, and to be put ashore. This being so, the boats were got out and a hundred odd volunteers were landed on the beach. When they were all on shore, they were drawn up, and Hawkins said farewell to each man and promised again that he would do everything in his power to get them brought back to England, "and," adds Hortop the gunner, "so he did." To each man he gave six yards of good English broadcloth for barter with the Indians, and also, to those who asked for it, money. The story of these men and of the prisoners left at San Juan de Ulua will be dealt with in another chapter.

Having landed the shore party, the "Minion" started on her long voyage home.

For a week they sailed up the coast before they found water to fill their casks. For three days of that week, Hawkins and fifty men were marooned on shore by a

storm which very nearly wrecked the ship. At last they got away from the Mexican coast, but so tempestuous was the weather that it was not until the middle of November that the "Minion" passed out through the Florida Channel into the Atlantic.

The wretched crew suffered terribly from hunger. Men died each day from downright starvation. As the ship approached Europe southerly gales drove her out of her course, but in spite of having scarcely a fit man left to work her, Hawkins somehow managed to bring her to Ponte Vedra, in Vigo Bay.

Here victuals in plenty were obtainable, but the starving crew devoured such quantities of fresh meat that forty-five men died while the ship lay at anchor opposite the town. As there were not now enough men left to sail the ship to England, they towed the "Minion" to the town of Vigo, where twelve new hands were obtained out of an English ship lying there.

On January 20th he sailed for home, to the extreme annoyance of King Philip II, who ordered an inquiry to be held at Vigo to explain why the authorities had allowed the arch-pirate to escape. Contemporary Spanish authors paint a vivid picture of the indomitable English Admiral, whom they describe as a courteous man, erect and well-proportioned, looking much less than his real age, and tell how, while in the Spanish port, he was dressed in crimson velvet breeches, knitted stockings, and a scarlet leather jacket trimmed with silver braid. Sometimes he wore over all a silk cloak and a long gold chain. Thus did he hide a broken heart and an empty stomach.

On January 25th the tired seamen reached the coast of Cornwall. It was a farm labourer, at work in a field above Mount's Bay, who first saw the battered ship come in and anchor. A boat put off from her, and a weather-beaten and gaunt figure of a man landed on the beach.

He was, he told the gaping villagers, one of the few survivors of John Hawkins' famous expedition to the Indies.

The farm labourer wasted no time, but hurried off to Plymouth to tell the great tidings to William Hawkins, who at once sent a fresh crew to bring the "Minion" round to Plymouth.

According to the Spanish Ambassador, out of the hundred men who left the coast of Mexico, only fifteen remained alive to tell the tale.

Thus ended the troublesome voyage of Mr. John Hawkins, who ends his narrative with these words :

"If all the miseries and troublesome affairs of this sorrowful voyage should be perfectly and thoroughly written, they should need a painful man with his pen, and as great a time as he had that wrote the lives and deaths of the Martyrs."



## CHAPTER V

### THE BEGGARS OF THE SEA



I was a sick and disappointed Commander who landed in England on January 25th, 1569. Many a man in a similar plight would have admitted himself defeated, but not John Hawkins. On the same day that the "Minion" dropped anchor at the little Cornish port of Padstow, the Captain despatched a letter to Sir William Cecil, and with the letter enclosed a written account of the voyage and its disastrous termination. The letter runs as follows :

"RIGHT HONOURABLE,—My duty most humbly considered : it may please your honour to be advertised that on the 25th day of January (thanks be to God) we arrived in a place in Cornwall called Mounts Bay, only with the *Myntion* which is left us of all our fleet, and because I would not in my letter be prolix, after what manner we came to our disgrace, I have sent your honour here inclosed some part of the circumstance, and though not all our myseries that hath past yet the greatest matters worthy of noting, but if I should write of all our calamities I am sure a volume as great as the bible will scarcely suffyce ; all which thing I most humbly beseech your honour to advertise the Queens Majesty and the rest of the Counsel (such as you shall think meet). Our voyage was, although very hardly, well achieved and brought to reasonable pass, but now a great

part of our treasure, merchandize, shiping and men devoured by the treason of the Spaniards. I have not much or anything more to advertise your honour more the rest, because all our business hath had infelicity, misfortune, and an unhappy end, and therefore will trouble the Queens Majesty nor the rest of my good lords with such ill news. But herewith pray your honours estate to impart to such as you shall think meet the sequel of our business.

“ I mind with God’s grace to make all expedition to London myself, at what time I shall declare more of our estate that is here omitted. Thus praying to God for your Honour’s prosperous estate take my leave : from the *Mynion* to 25th day of January 1569.

“ Yours most humbly to command,  
“ JOHN HAWKYNS.”

With John Hawkins safely back in England, we will for the present leave him in London, in deep counsel with the Queen and her advisers, and stop to inquire what had been happening during his fifteen months’ absence from England.

Mary Queen of Scots had been imprisoned in the North of England before Hawkins’ departure, and already conspiracies were on foot for her release. Matters on the Continent appeared to be quiet. The usual mutterings could be heard from the Netherlands, whose stubborn inhabitants still refused to recognize the advantage of being part and parcel of the Spanish Empire. Gradually these mutterings increased to threatenings which at last reached the ears of the dilatory King of Spain, at Madrid.

The Duke of Alva, the victorious and ruthless General, had arrived from Italy with an army of Spanish veterans to crush and stamp out the revolt. In spite of carnage and torture, the brave little nation continued to resist

and rose up in arms to fight the bully who endeavoured to destroy its very existence. The War of Independence opened, and William of Orange invaded the Netherlands at the head of an army. This army was defeated and routed, but it proved to be the torch which set light to the bonfire of revolt. Also it had taught the Dutch a lesson they took to heart and profited by, namely that their hope of salvation and independence of the Spanish yoke lay not on land but on the sea.

It was from La Rochelle that help was to come. This seaport town had become the headquarters of the Protestants and Huguenots, after the second civil war in France had died down. Its harbour was crowded with shipping. Day and night workmen and sailors were busy repairing and fitting out ships of war. In September 1568 the Prince of Condé took up his residence there, with Admiral Coligny and his brother d'Andelot. The Queen of Navarre with her little son Henry was there also, and it became the rallying point of the Huguenots' cause. In the name of God, and for the sake of Protestantism, the Queen and the Prince of Condé issued letters of marque against all Catholic shipping, whether it was Spanish, Flemish or French.

One of Coligny's brothers, the Huguenot Cardinal Châtillon, was sent over to England to seek help, and carried with him a bundle of the new commissions to distribute amongst the many English adventurers who were burning to serve under his or any other flag, on so noble a cause.

In October a fleet of eleven well-armed ships-of-war sailed out of La Rochelle harbour, and then followed the harrying of Spanish ships in the Channel. All communications between Spain and the Netherlands were by sea. All reinforcements and supplies for Alva's army had to run the gauntlet of the heretic ships which lay in waiting for them in the narrow seas. Nor were

these enemies to be despised. English, Dutch or French ships, they were all manned by crews of brave and skilful sailors, born to the sea, and hot with desire to fight the hated Spaniard.

Ship after ship was seized and carried into the nearest friendly port. Prize after prize was brought into Plymouth Harbour. William Hawkins, the Mayor, was a wealthy merchant and ever ready to buy the spoils they brought. He was himself deeply involved in the enterprise, having sent out many of his own ships under letters of marque, to join with the Prince of Condé's privateers. The Huguenot Captains, whether Dutch or French, were always sure of a warm welcome at Plymouth from another important personage, the Vice-Admiral of Devon, Sir Arthur Champernowne. Every Devon gentleman who owned a ship to his name was joining in the hunt. Not only were such men as William Hawkins and Champernowne at the game, but men of less fame and respectability. Such for instance was Martin Frobisher, who had achieved the reputation of being a pirate rather than a privateer. This adventurer equipped at his own cost three ships, and with them soon wiped out his murky past and began a new career of fame and honourable success.

Before long, the Prince of Condé had a fleet of more than fifty vessels cruising the Channel, thirty of which were English. To show where her sympathies lay, Queen Elizabeth sent as a present (an unusual gesture of generosity for her) to Rochelle, 6 guns, 300 barrels of powder, 4000 cannon-balls, and a sum of money to the tune of £7000.

The activities of the Condé ships began at once to have effect, and Spain soon began to feel the pinch.

The Duke of Alva, victorious as his troops had been, kept calling to King Philip for money to pay his soldiers. He had hoped and boasted that in the Netherlands he

would by plunder win enough gold not only to pay his men, but enough over to send to Spain. Actually he managed to procure very little. The King of Spain, wealthy as his country was, could not at the moment produce the money Alva demanded and, as the matter was urgent, he had recourse to Italian bankers, and from them raised an enormous loan.

This loan consisted of specie, and was immediately despatched by sea to Alva. In doing this, the Spaniards committed one of those acts of astounding stupidity of which they were guilty from time to time.

Knowing, as they well did, that the narrow seas swarmed with the Prince of Condé's cruisers on the look out for them, yet they sent the whole of the treasure in one merchant vessel and a few small pinnaces ; unarmed, and without an escort.

In the words of Mr. Williamson, they were like "half a dozen lambs sent forth to make their way through a pack of hungry wolves," and "The wolves were not slow to scent their prey."

As this small but valuable fleet approached the Channel, the privateers, already warned and on the look out, were waiting. When they sighted the Huguenot ships the fleet broke up in disorder and fled. The big merchantman, carrying fifty-nine chests of specie in her hold, ran for Southampton, with three English and three French privateers at her heels.

The authorities of Southampton persuaded the Captain of the treasure-ship that his valuable cargo would be safer on shore than on board his ship. Their arguments were backed up by the guns of the fort, and by the hungry "wolves" waiting for their prey outside Southampton Water. The Captain judged it wisest to agree, and the money was carried on shore and locked up in safety.

In the meanwhile, what of the pinnaces ? Several had put into Plymouth and Falmouth Harbours, with

ninety-five boxes of money between them. At these ports the authorities were as assiduous as those of Southampton for the safety of the Spanish money, and insisted on taking care of it themselves.

The Spanish Ambassador at once demanded of the Queen that the treasure should be collected and sent to London, and despatched from there by sea to Alva, under a strong guard. Alva was becoming desperate for the money, as his soldiers threatened mutiny. At first Elizabeth appeared to agree to the Ambassador's suggestion ; in any case it would be difficult to keep the Spanish money without some good excuse. She herself wanted the money badly, and equally her Protestant allies did not wish the Duke of Alva to get possession of it. Then in the very nick of time a rumour began to spread abroad. It concerned Admiral John Hawkins, who should have returned by September, and about whom anxiety was beginning to be felt. December had come, and there was still no news of his expedition. Amongst the crews of the treasure pinnaces was found and questioned a Spaniard who had lately returned from the West Indies. He had a tale to tell about Hawkins, which was, on the face of it, untrue, but might possibly have an element of truth about it. According to this man, the English had been very successful, having taken a rich treasure-ship and plundered a city. Finding the season far advanced, the English Admiral had decided to winter in the West Indies, and intended to return to England in May. To lend a realistic touch to the story, he added that " the worst boy in those ships, if God send them home in safety, may be a Captain for riches, and he (the Spaniard) wished to God that he had been one of his men." So much for the Spanish sailor's story ; which, true or not, was all the news there was to go upon, until presently there arrived other news, very different from the first. This reached William Hawkins, at

Plymouth, and came from a Spaniard, Benedict Spinola, who reported there was a rumour going about in Spain that John Hawkins had been killed in a fight with some Spanish troops in Mexico. This last report, although unwelcome, came at a most opportune moment. It was difficult for the Queen, without good cause, to refuse to give up the King of Spain's gold which had so providentially fallen into her lap, and here was an excuse to hold it, until further news as to the fate of John Hawkins was forthcoming. In the meantime on further inquiry of Spinola, who acted as the London agent for the lenders of the treasure, it turned out that the money was not the property of Philip until it was actually delivered at Antwerp ; until then it belonged to the bankers.

Here was a splendid opportunity for killing valuable time, and the Queen ordered that an investigation should be made to settle the legal ownership of the bullion. The result of this inquiry proved, of course, that the money was the rightful property of the Italian owners. The next step was that the owners consented to lend the money, not to the King of Spain, but to the Queen of England. Under the circumstances the Italian bankers must have been only too glad to agree to this arrangement, for otherwise they stood a good chance of losing their money altogether. The wisdom of holding the treasure, if there had been any question about it, was soon confirmed in no uncertain measure. It was on January 20th that the townsfolk of Plymouth were stirred by the sight of a small and battered vessel, which came limping into the Sound. News quickly spread that she was the "Judith," with young Francis Drake, the kinsmen of Mr. William Hawkins, in command ; and the quay was soon crowded with excited men, women and children. Almost before the anchor was dropped, the young Captain rowed ashore, and hurried up Kinterbury Street to tell his uncle the news. William

Hawkins, having heard the tale, lost no time, for this was a matter of which the Queen's Council should be informed without delay. So Francis Drake was despatched to London with a letter. In this was told the story of the vile treachery of the Spaniards at San Juan, and of the loss of the ships, men and treasure. Of the fate of his brother John, he still knew nothing. His letter was addressed in the manner of the time, when one of extreme urgency was sent to Court, as follows :

“ To the Right Honourable and my singularly good Lords, the Lords of the Privy Council : give this at the Court with all speed. Haste ! Haste ! ”

Scarcely had Drake time to reach London with this letter, when another message reached William Hawkins. This came by a Cornish countryman who had travelled with all speed from Mount's Bay, knowing that a handsome reward would be his for bearing the news he brought. And news indeed it was. He had seen, with his own eyes, John Hawkins himself, and from his pocket he pulled out a letter written by him which was to be forwarded to London. The contents of the letter we know. William Hawkins sent a fresh crew to bring the “ Minion ” round to Plymouth, and despatched to Cecil the letter which his brother had written on board the “ Minion.”

A few days later John Hawkins arrived with his ship at Plymouth, to the joy of his wife and little son Richard, now a tall boy of nine, who had been waiting in anxiety for his return, at the house in Kinterbury Street.

Soon the treasure was landed from the “ Minion ” and placed in safe keeping, and John set out for London. He had much to do there. The Queen and her Council must learn first hand from him the true story of the disaster ; the partners in the venture must go into the accounts and make a share of the profits.

Hawkins, ever mindful of the welfare of his crews, had not forgotten the hundred men he had put on land and left to shift for themselves in the hostile Mexican coast. Last of all, there had to be an official Admiralty inquiry held, and witnesses had to be brought, and statements of costs and losses prepared.

While John Hawkins was in London, busy with the affairs of his late voyage, new developments were taking place.

In the year 1569 there arose a new power, the Beggars of the Sea. This strange force was formed of Dutch, Flemish and English ships, carrying on war against Catholic shipping under the commission of the Prince of Orange. The Admiral who commanded these irregular sea-fighters was the Count de la Marck. Their headquarters were at Dover, but Plymouth Harbour knew them well, for there they used to fly for safety, or to refit. The Hawkinses had several ships in the fleet, and made large profits from the spoil brought to the town to be sold.

No secret was made of this, for the cargoes were sold in open market. According to the Spanish Ambassador, it was no unusual thing for Spanish gentlemen who had been taken prisoners by the Sea Beggars to be actually exhibited and bid for in public auction in Dover. A well-dressed Spaniard was expected to fetch as much as one hundred pounds, being bought with the view to future ransom. But, however much the Ambassador might rant and rail at this indignity to his fellow subjects, they suffered far less than did most of those unfortunate Englishmen who lingered for years in Mexican or Spanish prisons, liable to torture or death at the stake.

Many ships from Plymouth and Southampton had joined the Beggars of the Sea. There was for instance the "New Bark" which took several Catholic ships, bringing in the spoils to Plymouth. The "Castle of Comfort,"

too, was fitted out for the privateering business, and placed under the command of Captain Thomas Jones, a gentleman of Lynn, who procured a commission from the Prince of Condé with which "to pass unto the seas in warlike suit to apprehend and take all the enemies of God, otherwise called papists."

Captain Jones held broad views of what constituted an enemy of God, and played havoc in the North Sea on Spanish, Flemish and German ships.

Jacques de Sores, who became commander-in-chief of the Beggars, made his base at the Isle of Wight, and stopped every foreign vessel that passed, seizing all that proved to be the property of a papist. In December, 1569, he captured two great carracks off the Island. One of these he re-armed and pressed into service, christening her "La Grande Huguenotte."

By the end of the year the Beggars of the Sea numbered almost a hundred ships and had taken three hundred prizes, under licences issued by the Prince of Orange.

In the summer of 1569 John Hawkins took command of a fleet which was sent to La Rochelle for the relief of the Huguenots. Over sixty ships sailed together—eight of which were equipped by William Hawkins—and carried a quantity of grain and 500 salted carcasses of cattle, all very acceptable to their allies on the other side of the Channel. Fifty English engineers, who were taken as passengers, were men skilled in making batteries, trenches and other fortifications. The expedition was successfully carried through without any fighting, and much to the credit of the leader.

There is curiously little known about this voyage to La Rochelle, nor do we know much of what Hawkins was doing during the following year. One bold project was the child of his active brain, ever on the look out to find some means by which he could be revenged on the

perfidious Spaniard, and at the same stroke gain wealth for his Sovereign and himself. It was in June, 1570, that Hawkins wrote to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, putting before him his ambitious plan. This was nothing less than a scheme to hold up the next home-coming Spanish plate-fleet at the Azores, where it was due to pass in two months' time, on its annual voyage from New to Old Spain.

Hawkins, with his usual thoroughness about detail, calculated the value of the prize at £6,000,000, and went so far as to suggest how this enormous sum of money should be divided, allotting a very handsome share to the Queen.

If a strong squadron was equipped and despatched to the Azores in time, he was sure that the "whole fleet (with God's grace) shall be intercepted and taken within these three months, for the extreme injuries offered unto this realm ; which wrongs being satisfied with the costs, the great mass shall be at the courtesy of the Queen's Highness to restore or keep."

Should his plan be looked upon with favour, he himself would be willing and able to furnish ten warships at his own cost, and he strongly advised that the Queen should be asked to lend the "Bonaventure" and the "Bull," two of the largest Royal ships-of-war, to take part in the enterprise. As to arms and powder to supply the ships, Hawkins promised to be answerable for these.

Leicester put the matter before the Queen, who quite approved of it, since it was one entirely to her liking. The Council, however, when they discussed it were far from unanimous, some being for and some against the project.

Although the Council ended by refusing to sanction the scheme, there is no doubt that at first they looked upon it with some favour, for they gave leave to Hawkins

to get ready the ships he had promised. For two years his ten armed and fully equipped ships lay at Plymouth waiting for the order to sail ; but it never came.

Although the Queen, owing to the political situation nearer home, could not employ Hawkins in this bold enterprise against the plate-fleet at the Azores, she did find other services of State to occupy his talents. Twice in this year he was sent abroad, in his ship the "New Bark," on certain secret business for her.

Thus ended the year 1570, to give place to a new year, in which we meet with a new John Hawkins, or more truly the old John Hawkins in a new character.

As to the Beggars of the Sea, for three years they continued to scour the Channel, and a stream of merchandise poured into English warehouses, for "few ships escaped their long fingers." But this happy state of things could not last for ever. Spanish or other Catholic ship-owners would not continue indefinitely to send their ships and goods to run the gauntlet of these ruthless privateers, who, under the flag of the Prince of Orange and in the name of the true religion, sank their vessels and stole their goods. The result was an almost complete stoppage of trade of all kinds. The shocking Massacre of St. Bartholomew, in 1572, had badly shaken the Huguenot cause in France, and La Rochelle itself, the citadel of Protestantism, was in danger of falling into the enemy's hands. To prevent this calamity, though more for the sake of England than for any other reason, Elizabeth had sent aid to the stricken city. As for her brave allies the Dutch, they were left to struggle on as best they could without further aid from England, since it was considered by Burghley that England had enough irons in the fire already, without running the risk of irritating Spain to desperation, as might well happen if she continued to pour English troops and money into the Netherlands.

The cessation of trade at sea, due to the success of the Sea Beggars, was not at all to the liking of English merchants. So long as plunder was brought into auction and knocked down at ridiculous prices, they were satisfied ; but, now that the golden goose was in danger of expiring, and almost all legitimate trade had withered, the merchants began to cry out to the Government to suppress their late friends and allies, the privateers.

So great became their outcry that, in January, 1573, two powerful ships were chartered and sent out under the command of William Holstocke, the Comptroller of the Navy, to make war on the Sea Beggars, no difference being made between the privateers, whether Dutch, English or of La Rochelle.

These two ships were armed with such heavy guns that they had not to resort to boarding in an engagement. In the Downs they came across half a dozen of the privateers, heavily laden with recently acquired plunder. Holstocke invited all the Captains to come aboard, which they did in all innocence, only to be made prisoners. Continuing his voyage, the English Commander took another twenty vessels, bound on the same business, together with much booty and 800 men. According to a contemporary account, probably exaggerated, since it came from a Huguenot source, the English netted a tidy swag of two million pounds. This, following on Elizabeth's desertion of her old friends the Dutch, gave sufficient excuse for the enemies of her country to speak scornfully of " perfidious Albion."

But these were ruthless times, when men and nations had to think and act for themselves, and when no sentimental ties could be allowed to interfere in the struggle for life and national existence.

This rough handling of the Sea Beggars very soon brought about an improvement in the relations between

Spain and England, which was the intention aimed at by the English Council. With the curbing of the privateers, trade between Spain and the Netherlands soon began to revive.

Although the Sea Beggars were checked in their promiscuous warfare, they were far from being exterminated. Under the Count de Montgomery, who had recently married a daughter of Sir Arthur Champernowne, the Devonshire sailor, a formidable fleet was gathered together at Plymouth, in February, 1573. The Hawkins brothers contributed eight ships, and the Queen, unofficially, a 300-ton vessel, the "Primrose," which the Admiral, Montgomery, took for his flagship. Many of the Captains in the fleet bore names famous in the annals of the sea, as the two Fenners, George and Edward, the younger Winter, who afterwards sailed with Drake round the world, and the French Commander, Jacques de Sores.

The object of this powerful fleet, which was made up of some fifty or sixty ships, was the relief of the beleaguered town of La Rochelle, which was closely besieged by the Duke of Anjou, who became afterwards King Henry III. This naval enterprise, prepared so carefully, but commanded by soldiers, proved a miserable failure, but fortunately for the defenders of La Rochelle, the siege soon after was raised.

John Hawkins was to have taken part in this expedition, but at the last moment the Queen forbade him to go. Had he gone, and in command, the probability is that he would have succeeded in finding means of entering the port and achieving success, which the soldier leader failed to do.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE CAPTIVES



LET us, for a while, leave John Hawkins, and inquire after the men who had been left on the shore in the Gulf of Mexico.

The affair of San Juan de Ulua did not finish on that afternoon of September, in 1568, when the "Minion," battered and defeated, drew out of the shot-ridden harbour to seek quiet and safety elsewhere to heal her grievous wounds.

Far from being the end of an incident it was the beginning of a new era, for the defeat at San Juan was to prove the tragic birth of the greatest period in English history. From the day of Don Enriquez's base treachery, there grew up slowly, gradually, becoming stronger and mightier each year, a power new to the world. Out of a small country united as she had never been before arose a nation which dreamed of and toiled for revenge for the treacherous wrong done her by the colossal power of Spain.

An all-overpowering hatred of Spain lit up the whole country when the "Minion" first brought the tidings to England of the disaster. The news that more than a hundred of her sons were prisoners in the cruel grip of the Catholic power only added fuel to the fire. Of the English captives left behind in Mexico, the first to become a prisoner had been Robert Barrett, the Master of the "Jesus," who had been sent by Hawkins to demand

of the Viceroy an explanation of the suspicious movements of the Spanish troops at San Juan. What happened to Barrett and the other prisoners did not transpire until several years later.

When the Spanish flagship sank, the prisoners were rescued and carried on shore. Their punishment was to follow later, though for some of the English sailors it came quickly ; for several of them "they took and hung up by their arms upon high posts until the blood burst out of their fingers ends." One of these wretches, by name of Copstow, somehow or another managed to reach England many years after, and lived to show the scars on his hands to gaping spectators, a demonstration of torture which must have done much to keep up the general indignation against Spain. Other prisoners, treacherously taken at San Juan de Ulua, were the ten hostages, amongst whom was George Fitzwilliam, who had accompanied John Hawkins on his previous voyage, John Varney, and one Fowler. These in company with some other prisoners taken during the fight were marched off up country to Mexico City, to remain there until the following year.

The fate of many of these men was never known, but there is no reason to think it was more merciful than that meted out to Robert Barrett. The latter, in 1570, was shipped, still in irons like a common felon, to Spain. For three years he lay in a dungeon at Seville, when he was taken out, dragged before the Holy Inquisition to be tried for heresy ; condemned and burned.alive at the stake.

Of the adventures of the hundred starving sailors and soldiers put on shore by Hawkins on the Mexican coast we know a good deal, thanks to the narratives left by two of the survivors. One was written by Miles Philips, "who was only a boy when captured," the other by Job Hortop, gunner of the "Jesus."

It was on the 8th of October that the hungry crew of the "Minion" declared they could hold out no longer, "and a great many did desire that our general to set them on land, making their choice rather to submit themselves to the mercie of the Savages or Infidels, than longer to hazard themselves at sea, where they very well saw, that if they remained together, if they perished not by drowning, yet hunger would inforce them to eat one another." As we know, Hawkins agreed to the suggestion, but kept the right to retain on board those men who would be of most use to him in navigating the ship. When the hundred odd men mustered to enter the boats to go ashore, many changed their minds and begged to remain on board, "and it would have caused many a stoney heart to have relented to hear the pitiful moan that many did make, and how loth they were to depart." The landing took place on the evening of October 8th, 1568. It was dangerous and difficult to land, owing to the high surf, and two of Captain Bland's Frenchmen were drowned. Thus the enterprise began with tragedy and in tragedy it continued.

The party soon found a supply of fresh water, but such was their thirst that some of the men drank so much, it took several hours to resuscitate them. Others eat largely of a fruit, a sort of almond, and became "cruelly swollen" and in very ill ease, "indeed everybody was soon both feeble, faint and weak."

After a wakeful night, disturbed by false alarms of Indians, and very real internal pains due to eating acid fruits, morning at last came. Forming in ranks of three, the little army marched off along the sea coast in the direction of Tampico, hungry and wet through, for the rain had not ceased to pour down on them in torrents throughout the whole night.

Struggling through the thick jungle by the shore, they were brought to a standstill by a terrible whoop-

ing and shouting. This hullabaloo was caused by a tribe of warlike Indians, called the "Chichimici, a kind of people, which are in a manner as Canibals."

This sudden attack by the savages might well have alarmed the wanderers, for Job Hortop tells us, "they use to weare their haire long, even down to their knees, they do also colour their faces green, yellow, red and blue, which maketh them to seem very ugly and terrible to behold." This sudden onset was all the more disconcerting since the Englishmen had not a piece of armour amongst them, and the only arms carried in the whole company were one caliver and two old rusty swords.

It must be admitted that even on a full stomach and in full armour, it would be far from reassuring to enter into battle with such terrifying foes, armed only with one caliver and two old rusty swords.

The warlike Indians soon observed that these strangers were different from the usual armed Spaniards, who were their natural and mortal enemies. At the first alarm, a flight of arrows had been discharged into the midst of the seamen, resulting in eight of them being killed and several wounded. Now all was changed : for "when they perceived that we sought not any other than favour and mercie at their hands, and that we were not their enemies the Spaniards, they had compassion on us, and came and caused us all to sit down : and when they had a while surveyed, and taken a perfect view of us, they came to all such as had any coloured clothes amongst us, and those they did strip starke naked, and took their clothes away with them, but those that were apparelled in black they did not meddle withall." After the Indians had had a good stare at the unusual spectacle of a large assembly of English sailors, either dressed in black or else mother naked, they allowed them to continue their journey, pointing out the right direction to follow to reach the town of Tampico,

It was decided that it would be better to travel in two separate companies, so one of some fifty men marched under the command of John Hooper, while another and smaller detachment elected Anthony Godard to be their leader.

On resuming their march, one party took a northern route, the other a westerly ; but after struggling on for ten days they met again. Both had suffered various misfortunes, several men being killed, including John Hooper. John Cornish too was slain by an arrow shot by an Indian boy while Cornish and a chief were having a friendly discussion about the future ownership of a shirt. The boy was standing beside the chief at the time, who was so indignant that "he struck the boy on the neck, so that he lay for dead."

For many days the two parties toiled along, and daily the naked increased as the clothes grew less, for whenever they met new Indians, off had to come their clothes before they were allowed to proceed further towards Tampico.

The journey must have been a terrible ordeal. They had to struggle naked through jungle matted together, with branches and plants covered with sharp thorns. Often the Indians would attack small parties of men who had straggled from the main company in search of wild fruit or berries. As though this was not bad enough, these naked wretches "were also oftentimes greatly annoyed with a kind of flye, which the Spaniards called Muskitos." "There are also in the said country a number of other kinde of flies, but not so noisome as these." Some were so small as scarcely to be visible, yet "they will suck ones blood marvelously." To protect their naked bodies from these and from the scorching sun, the sailors made themselves "wreathes of green grass which we covered about our bodies." Thus they struggled on for another ten days, now and

again a man clambering up to the top of some tall tree to look for any town or sign of a settlement. One day the outlook up one of the trees called down to those below that he could discern a great river away to the north, where it opened into the sea. Still more encouraging was a sound they heard almost immediately afterwards, a sound which was recognized as "an harquebuze shot off, which did greatly incourage us, for thereby we knew that we were near some Christians."

Much heartened by this sound of a Christian probably shooting at a heathen, the worn-out sailors started once more on their march. The next encouragement was to hear the shrill crowing of a cock, "which was no small joy unto us"; being further evidence of the proximity of Christianity.

An hour later; they at last broke through the jungle into full view of the river Panuco, which they had been so long in search of. "Of this river we drank very greedily, for we had not met any water in six days before," and there they lay and rested on the river bank. Lying there, wondering how they were to cross the river, all of a sudden appeared, on the opposite bank, a party of twenty Spanish horsemen. The Spaniards seeing the naked Englishmen mistook them for Indians, and jumping into canoes were paddled across, leading their swimming horses by the bridles. On reaching the bank, they saddled and mounted their horses, lowered their lances, and without more ado charged the reclining wanderers. This was the usual method by which the conquering Christians were accustomed to deal with the native problem in Mexico. Some of the Englishmen, armed with clubs and staves, were for defending themselves against the advancing horsemen, but their Captain, Anthony Godard, pointed out to them the uselessness of resistance and signalled to the enemy that they surrendered.

Putting four men in each canoe, the whole company was ferried across the river. On reaching the other bank Godard explained the starving condition that they were in to the Spaniards, who gave to each two men a maize cake, "the bigness of our halfpenny loaves." After this light but very welcome repast, all the men were sent off on foot, under a strong guard of Indians, to the neighbouring town of Panuco, whilst the boys and those men who were too feeble to walk were carried on horseback behind the Spanish soldiers.

The town, which was only a mile away, appeared at first sight to be a pleasant spot planted out with various sorts of fruit-trees, such as lemons, oranges, pomegranates, apricots and peaches. Of the inhabitants only about 200 were Spaniards, men, women and children, the remainder being made up of large numbers of "tame Indians" or Mexicans, as well as negro slaves. On arriving at the town they were officially welcomed by his Excellency the Governor, "who shewed himself very severe unto us, and threatened to hang us all: and then he demanded what money we had, which in truth was very little, for the Indians which we first met withal, had in a manner taken all from us, of that which they left, the Spaniards which brought us over, took away a good part also."

Thus the much harassed wanderers found themselves in very awkward predicament. So, too, did the Governor, for to hang out of hand a hundred men was no small undertaking. The problem was solved, and the present pressing situation saved, by Anthony Godard, who suddenly produced from hiding a handsome gold chain, a present to him from the Governor of Cartagena which, together with some 500 pesos collected from his followers, he offered to the business-like Governor, who accepted the same and agreed to reconsider his sentence.

In the meantime the prisoners were confined in a

hog-sty, crowded together, somewhat after the style of the black hole of Calcutta, with nothing to eat but sodden maize meal.

As many of the sailors were suffering from wounds which were in urgent need of dressing, permission was sought of the Governor to have the sick attended by surgeons, but the Governor, who seems to have been a hectoring bully, "answered that we should have none other surgeon but the hangman, which should sufficiently heal us of our grieves, and then reviling us, and calling us English dogs and Lutheran heretics."

After four days of misery, penned up in the stinking, sweltering hog-sty, the prisoners were ordered to come out, to find a mob of Indians and Spaniards outside, all armed and carrying new halters. At last, they felt, their hour had come. But, instead of being to hang them with, the halters were to bind the prisoners' arms behind their backs, and thus they were roped together in couples and ordered to march on their long journey to Mexico City, 180 miles away. On the second day they passed through a town called Santa Maria, where there was a house of White Friars. Let it be said to the credit of these good men that they treated the Englishmen with great kindness, giving them hot cooked mutton and broth, and also garments to cover their nakedness, made of white baize.

The next hot meal they got was at another town called Mestitlan. Their hosts at this place were a community of Black Friars, who had a ready cooked meal awaiting them. Here the Spanish population, both men and women, "used us very courteously and gave us some shirts and other things we lacked."

The prisoners, on this march, had only two Spaniards to look after them, and the armed Indian guard. One of the Spaniards was an aged man, who was both kindly and gentle, going on ahead to each resting-place to have

food prepared for his charges. The other, a young man, was the exact opposite in every way, for he bullied and swore, and whenever some tired-out man lagged he would take his spear in both hands and jab the wretch in the back, calling him an English dog, a Lutheran, or an enemy to God. At last the prisoners were so exhausted with their wounds, bare feet, and want of food and rest, that the old Spaniard called a halt, and, greatly against the wish of the younger man, allowed them two days' rest.

Thus they toiled slowly on, dragging their tired feet towards the city of Mexico.

When at last they got within a few miles of the city, they were met by great crowds of gentlemen and tradesmen, who had ridden out to see so uncommon a spectacle as a large haul of English prisoners.

It was not until four o'clock in the afternoon that they entered the famous city by the Street of Saint Catherine, which leads to the Plaza de Marquese, in which stood the palace of the new Viceroy of Mexico, Don Martin Enriquez. The streets were lined by the citizens of Mexico and their wives and children, who stared but offered no unkindness to the dusty and tired sailors as they shuffled by.

After a very hearty meal and a rest, the prisoners were placed in two large canoes and conveyed along a canal to "Our Ladies Hospital." Here they found some of their late mess-mates, taken prisoner at San Juan de Ulua. Although they were over-crowded, the time spent here was not unhappy, for "we were courteously used and visited oftentimes by virtuous gentlemen and gentlewomen of the City, who bought us divers things to comfort us withal, as succats and marmalade and other such things, and would also many times give us many things and that very liberally."

At the end of six months in this hospital, the wounded

and sick who had not died were so far recovered that the Viceroy ordered the prisoners to be taken to a town called Tescuco, some twenty miles to the south of Mexico.

This place had a very evil name, being the place where the worst criminals were sent, for "there are certain houses for correction and punishment for ill people, like to Bridewell in London."

The reputation of Tescuco had not been exaggerated, for the English found themselves with scarcely food enough to keep them alive. No gentlemen nor ladies here to supply them with succats or marmalade. In fact, they would have died of starvation had it not been for the happy appearance of one Robert Sweeting, the son of an Englishman married to a Spanish woman. Through this man's good offices with the local Indians, enough food was procured to keep them from starvation. After two months' incarceration at Tescuco, the prisoners were driven to desperation, and they decided to break out of jail whatever the consequences might be. Escaping was easy enough, but having got outside they did not know where to go next. The night of the escape was pitch dark, the rain poured down in torrents, they had no one to guide them, but just blundered on, hoping to find themselves well away from danger by morning.

As dawn broke, after marching for hours, what more unwelcome spectacle should confront them but, of all places, the thrice accursed city of Mexico.

The escaped prisoners were at once surrounded and recaptured, and marched before the Viceroy, who was very angry and declared he would have the whole gang hanged for breaking out of the King's prison. As it happened they were not hanged, although many of them would have been more fortunate if they had been, in view of what was eventually to be their fate. Instead, they were sent to work in a garden belonging to the Viceroy. Here they found the English gentlemen de-

livered by Hawkins as hostages at San Juan de Ulua, as well as Robert Barrett, the master of the "Jesus." After working here for four months, the Viceroy issued a proclamation that any Spanish gentleman could procure an Englishman as a servant, by applying to the Magistrates. There was an instant rush by the neighbouring gentry to the garden, where the prisoners were looked over and each Spanish gentleman selected an Englishman for his service. Most of the men were turned into servants, and waited at their masters' tables or acted as chamberlains. As no Spaniard would consent to be a servant to another, all domestic work was done by Indians or negro slaves, so that it was considered to be a mark of high social position to travel abroad attended by a white servant. Some of the sailors did not make good butlers or valets, as can well be imagined, and these would be given other work. Some were sent by their masters to act as overseers of the gangs of slaves working in their silver mines. These posts at the mines were much sought after, as they could be made very profitable for the overseers. It was usual to pay a wage of sixty pounds a year to an overseer, but generally the English were able, by kind treatment of the slaves, to get them to work on Saturdays, the day they had off to work for themselves ; and to smelt silver which was the overseers' perquisite. Often one slave could, in this way, earn as much as four or five pounds for his overseer on one Saturday. Thus in a few years many of these overseers became extremely wealthy men.

As for the gentlemen hostages, they remained prisoners at the Viceroy's house until the plate-fleet was ready to sail to Spain from San Juan de Ulua.

Captivity in Mexico was not altogether too hard for the Englishmen now. Most of them made good money, and many held positions of trust. Sailors in Elizabethan days were generally masters of some craft or other, and could

make themselves useful in various ways. The Spaniards made the worst colonists in the world, a fact which makes the tragedy of the discovery and conquest of the New World by Spain all the more unfortunate. Probably no race in Europe was less fitted for the task of developing America than the Spaniards, who were exploiters rather than colonisers. The Spaniards' one idea was to get gold quickly, and to do this he must have slaves.

Here were some hundred men each of whom knew a trade, and was able and willing to work hard. The Spaniards in the West Indies and Mexico, with the exception of some of the higher officials, were on the whole perfectly friendly to the English. Left to themselves, many of the seamen married Spanish women or half-castes, embraced the Catholic faith, and settled down to become good subjects and colonists.

But in the year 1574 all this was changed, for there arrived in Mexico the foul blight of the Inquisition.

In this year, says Master Philips, "the Inquisition began to be established in the Indies, very much against the minds of many of the Spaniards themselves." These energetic apostles of the Pope of Rome soon got to their bloody work ; and on whom could they better begin than on these English heretics, many of whom had become very rich ; for a wealthy heretic, it was well known, made a better bonfire than a poor one.

Orders were sent out over the whole country-side that every Englishman should immediately report himself to the Inquisition in Mexico City. When they arrived there, they were cast into dark dungeons, and now and then taken out to be examined before the Holy Inquisitors.

They were commanded to repeat the *Pater noster*, the *Ave Maria* and the Creed in Latin, "which God knoweth a great number of us could not say, otherwise than in the English tongue."

Fortunately the Inquisition had engaged Robert Sweeting as interpreter, who had already shown himself to be a good friend to the English. He reported to the judges that "in our own country speech we could say them perfectly, although not word for word as they were in Latin." For this and other kindnesses the name of Robert Sweeting deserves to be remembered as the friend of English sailors in distress.

For weeks the trial dragged on, with occasional application of the thumb-screw and rack.

The upshot of it all was that after three months of bullying and torture, Mexico was given its first great spectacle of a real auto-de-fé.

Some thirty of Hawkins' men were tried by the Inquisition and received various sentences. In the case of boys or youths, such as David Alexander, Miles Philips and Paul Hawkins, who had been pages on the "Jesus" and "Minion," John Storey, aged 16, a "grumete" on board the "Swallow," Robert Cooks, a cook's boy, and Thomas Ebven servant to the cooper on the "Jesus," the sentences were lenient, consisting of nothing worse than two or three years' service in a monastery. But the punishments dealt out to all prisoners over 21 years were extremely severe. For example, Thomas Goodal, a native of London, of the age of 30, a brother-in-law of Robert Barrett, one of those who escaped from San Juan de Ulua in the "Minion," and was put ashore near Tampico, was tortured during his trial, and at the auto-de-fé received 300 stripes and was sentenced to row in the galleys of Spain for ten years. Roger, the chief armourer of the "Jesus," received the same sentence. Three sailors, George Rindy, Peter Mornfrie and Cornelius, an Irishman, were condemned to be burnt to death forthwith. In fact, all the prisoners over 21 years of age received brutal sentences of this kind, except the few who, like

Robert Barrett, were sent to stand their trial in Spain, and these were fortunate if they escaped being burnt at the stake.

Miles Philips was sent to a monastery of Black Friars, and was put in charge of the Indian workmen who were building a new church. He quickly learned to speak the Indian language with fluency, and "had great familiarity with many of them, whom I found to be a courteous and loving kind of people, ingenious and of great understanding and they hate and abhor the Spaniards with all their hearts." After Philips and the other lads had served their time in the religious houses, their fools' coats were taken off them and hanged up in the chief church, each coat being labelled with the man's name and sentence, with the addition "An heretic Lutheran reconciled." Those poor wretches who had been burnt had their coats hung up also, with the note "An obstinate heretic Lutheran burnt."

Having served their time, Miles Philips and his companions were now free to go where they would in Mexico, to find work.

It is interesting to learn that David Alexander and Robert Cooks returned to serve the Inquisitor, who shortly afterwards married them both to two of his negro women. Richard Williams married a rich widow, with 4000 pesos. Paul Homewell did well for himself by marrying a Mestisa, the daughter of a Spanish father and an Indian mother. She owned a good house and 4000 pesos.

John Stone was less ambitious and more easily satisfied, and took to wife a negro woman ; while William Lowe managed to get leave and licence to go to Spain where he married and settled down.

Philips had, at least he said so, many very good offers of marriage ; but he dared not settle in a country in which at any moment the Inquisition was liable to

pounce down and seize his goods, and as likely as not take his life.

Indeed, he gave up silver mining, at which he could easily and quickly have made a fortune, and set out to learn weaving, for which he paid down the sum of 150 pesos to be taught "the science" in three years, otherwise he would have had to serve an apprenticeship of seven years.

Philips worked hard at his new trade, awaiting for some opportunity to escape.

One day the whole city was in an uproar, for startling news had just been brought. It was reported that an Englishman had landed with a strong force at the port of Acapulco, on the Pacific coast, and was marching on Mexico City to plunder it. Philips and another of Hawkins' men, Paul Homewell, were sent for by the Viceroy, who inquired if either of them had heard of an Englishman named Francis Drake, who was said to be a brother of Captain Hawkins, to which they replied "that Captain Hawkins had not any brother but one, which was a man of the age of three-score years or thereabouts, and was now Governor of Plymouth in England, and then he demanded of us if we knew of one Francis Drake, and we answered, no."

Quickly the whole Spanish colony was mobilized and sent hither and thither to defend all the chief ports on both coasts. Philips was appointed English interpreter to Captain Don Pedro de Robles, who was despatched at the head of 200 men to Acapulco to capture this pirate Drake and his merry men.

They arrived at Acapulco a month too late, for Drake was gone. Yet a ship was chartered and off they sailed in search of the English interloper. They seem to have been an unseamenlike lot in the opinion of Philips, who remarks "that for certain, if we had met with Captain Drake, he might easily have taken us all." After

eighteen days' coasting, the Captain had to give up the quest on the grounds that "his men were very sore sea-sick."

Day after day Philips was hoping that they would meet "master Drake," for "then we should all be taken, so that then I should have been freed out of that danger and misery wherein I lived, and should return to mine owne country of England again."

It is tempting to follow the further adventures of Miles Philips, but this must not be. Let it suffice to say that after several unsuccessful attempts to escape he at last succeeded, through the kind offices of some Mexican Indians and a Gray Friar. After various vicissitudes he found his way to the port of Guatemala on the South Sea ; and from there travelled on to the port of Cavallos. Here he sold his horse and persuaded a Captain of a wine ship to take him, for 60 pesos, as a passenger in his vessel to Spain. They sailed to the rendezvous of the grand fleet at Havana, where Philips was engaged to serve as a soldier on the Admiralty ship. The fleet of thirty-seven ships, commanded by Don Pedro de Guzman, carried untold wealth of gold, silver and various precious goods from America and the East.

It is interesting to read an English sailor's opinion of one of the famous Spanish fleets. Of this fleet Philips writes: " Yet to speak truly of what I think, two good tall ships of war would have made a foul spoil amongst them. For in all this fleet there were not any that were strong and warlike appointed, saving only the Admiral and Vice-Admiral : and again over and besides the weakness and the ill furnishing of the rest, they were all so deeply laden, that they had not been able (if they had been charged) to have held out any long fight."

This unseaworthy fleet did, after a long and tiresome voyage of three months, arrive intact at San Lucar in Spain on September 10th, 1581. A seaman on board

had recognized Philips and informed the Captain who he was, who would have handed him over to the Inquisition at Seville, but Philips contrived to escape the same night in one of the ship's boats, and got ashore and walked to Cadiz, where he got work as a weaver. Afraid to go out in the streets for fear of being recognized, for three months he kept close to his work, and then, having saved some money, he bought himself a complete outfit of new clothes and made a dash for San Lucar, where he had heard that several English ships were lying in harbour. Rowing out to one of these he told his story to the Captain, and implored him to take him with him to England. The Captain "very courteously preyed me to have him excused, for he durst not meddle with me," and "preyed me therefore to return from whence I came." In desperation and sorrow, Philips left San Lucar and tramped to St. Mary's port, nine miles away, where, pretending to be a soldier who had to join a Spanish war-ship at Majorca, he got a passage in a vessel about to sail to that island.

Arrived there he found a West Country ship, the "Landret," about to sail for home. Having learnt a lesson from his last attempt he told the Captain a different story, that he had spent two years in Spain in order to learn the language and now wanted a passage home. At last, after an absence of sixteen years, he arrived at Poole in Dorset, in February, 1582.

The same year he published a narrative of his adventures and persecutions at the hands of the Spaniards, a story which must have done much to inflame the rising tide of hatred of Spain and the Catholic religion.

In the meanwhile, what had happened to Job Hortop and his fellow prisoners? Some, as has been said, had been chosen to act as body servants to Mexican gentlemen, others had been set to work at various trades. Hortop became a servant in the City, and remained so

for two years, when he was sent with a batch of prisoners to join the fleet about to leave San Juan de Ulua for Spain.

The Admiral of the Fleet was Don Juan de Valesco de Varne, who took with him a curious treasure for the King of Spain, a present from the Viceroy. It was no other than a skeleton of a Chinese giant, which excited Hortop's interest who was ever a lover of all that was strange or rare. Another curiosity on board was a chest full of earth in which grew plants of ginger. The English sailors, although prisoners, were engaged to work on the Spanish ships. Thus Robert Barrett became a pilot, or navigating officer, Hortop carried on his old duties as a gunner, William Cause served as boatswain, John Beare became a quarter-master, while others served as ordinary seamen.

According to Hortop, the Admiral would have lost his whole fleet in the Bahama channel, had not he and Barrett been on the alert and averted the catastrophe in the very nick of time, for which service they received the thanks of the Admiral. But a little while after this they got into bad odour. It happened as the fleet neared the Canary Islands, that the Englishmen had planned to escape in the pinnace, but their plot was discovered. The Captain of the ship was for hanging them all at once, but the Admiral would not allow this, ordering instead that the prisoners should be clapped in irons and handed over to the proper authorities in Seville, to be tried. On arriving in Spain, they were sent to prison, where they remained one year, when they managed to escape. Hortop, Barrett, Gilbert and two others were recaptured and secured in the stocks, where they remained for another twelve months. At last they were carried to the Inquisition house at Triana, where they remained another year. The prisoners were then taken out to hear the verdict of the Inquisition. Each man, wearing

a sambenito or coat on the back of which was embroidered a Cross of St. Andrew, and carrying a lighted candle in his hand, marched in procession through the streets of Seville, to a high scaffold. Seated there, the Secretary of the Inquisition called upon Robert Barrett and John Gilbert, who were brought to him by two familiars. He then read out their sentences, which were that both should be burnt at the stake forthwith. Job Hortop and John Bone were next called and were sentenced to row in the galleys for ten years, and then to return to prison for life. The other prisoners were condemned, for various periods, to the galleys. Hortop spent twelve years chained to an oar, with a daily allowance of twenty-six ounces of coarse black biscuit on which to subsist. The galley-slaves had their heads and beards shaved once a month, and “hunger, thirst, cold, and stripes we lacked none, till our several times expired.” After serving his time in the galleys Hortop spent four years in prison until, by bribing the Treasurer of the King’s Mint, Señor Hernando de Sovia, with fifty ducats, he was freed. This sum he borrowed from the Treasurer, and to pay off this debt Hortop was compelled to serve him as a drudge for seven years.

In October, 1590, Hortop was sent to San Lucar, where he managed to hide himself on board a fly-boat, laden with wine and salt. Off the Cape the fly-boat was held up by an English ship, the “Galeon Dudley,” which took Hortop on board and landed him at Portsmouth, on December 2nd, 1590, and eventually he returned to his home at Redriffe on Christmas Eve, after an absence of twenty-three years, with empty pockets, and scarred with many wounds ; but with such a story to tell as few men ever had.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE RIDOLFI PLOT



ITH the year 1571, the curtain rises to disclose a new actor upon the stage. He is a strange and sinister figure, and is about to play a leading part in the history of his adopted country. By name Roberto Ridolfi, an Italian, he belonged to the proud Florentine family of Ridolfi di Piazza. Brought up to be a Banker, he had lived in London since Queen Mary came to the throne, and was employed by Sir William Cecil, lately become Lord Burghley, and others in high positions, in matters of finance.

He had another employer, about whom he seldom if ever spoke. This was His Holiness Pope Pius V. Ridolfi was an ardent Catholic, and acted as agent in England for the furtherance of the Catholic cause. To put it bluntly, Ridolfi was a spy and a conspirator. Under instructions from Rome and from the Spanish Ambassador in London, he worked to overthrow the English Government, the Protestant Church, and if possible to bring about the assassination of the Queen. To do all this he plotted to raise an insurrection, and involved in his schemes many of the highest in the land ; chief of all, the Catholic Duke of Norfolk, premier peer of England, to whom he promised in marriage Mary Queen of Scots, when she should mount the English throne.

To complete the *coup d'état* Ridolfi went to the Nether-

lands to arrange with the Duke of Alva to send his troops, who were to land and invade the South of England at the moment that Norfolk took the field.

In the meantime, Burghley got wind of the plot and, though strongly suspecting the Duke of Norfolk of being at the head of it, dare not act, without more direct evidence. It was at this stage in the affairs that John Hawkins appeared.

Ever since he had been forced to land his hundred men north of the Panuco river, after the San Juan disaster, his one and constant thought was how he could get these men back to England. He had learned that most of them were in prisons, in Mexico or in Seville, at the tender mercy of the officers of the Holy Inquisition.

Already Hawkins had visited Guerau de Spes, the Spanish Ambassador in London, and sought his intercession for their liberation, but without success. Refusing to be put off, he soon called again and this time let slip some very seditious remarks about the English Government. The Ambassador pricked up his ears at this, and lost no time in writing to Alva to tell him the interesting piece of news, at the same time suggesting the possibility of using the apparently disgruntled English sailor for their own ends.

The wily Admiral, having laid his bait, which had been nibbled at, now began to set his snare.

In March, 1571, he went one step further. He was able to do this with safety, having confided to Burghley his plan and received his sanction. His own object was the rescue of his men : Burghley's was to countermine the Spanish conspiracy which he knew existed, and of which he guessed Guerau de Spes was a leading member. Hawkins, on this occasion, made a definite offer to the Spanish Ambassador of the use of his private fighting fleet for any purpose that the King of Spain might desire. Hawkins, who was fast developing into a very crafty

diplomatist, added a scrap of personal information about himself which did more than anything else to throw dust in the eyes not only of the Ambassador, but, as soon as he heard of it, of the King of Spain himself. This was the fact, hitherto not known generally, that John Hawkins was a good Catholic.

This palpable untruth did not for one moment raise any suspicion, but on the contrary did more than anything else to assist his plans. It is a notable fact that although Hawkins was a Protestant and a religious man he had never been a violent partisan nor a Puritan, and it is probable that in his dealings with the Spaniards, both in Spain, the Canary Islands and the West Indies, he had never given expression to his personal views on religion.

An unexpected ally in Hawkins' counter-plot suddenly appeared in England. This was George Fitzwilliam, who had been one of the hostages sent by him to the traitor, Alvarez de Bacan, at San Juan de Ulua.

Fitzwilliam, with several more of the prisoners, had been sent from Mexico to Spain, to await his trial by the Inquisition. Of the ten hostages, four were already dead, and the six survivors were dying of starvation, when they contrived to send a letter from their prison to Cecil, telling him of their distress. Through Cecil, news of the imprisonment of Fitzwilliam was communicated to the Duchess of Feria, an Englishwoman married to a courtier of the King of Spain, and herself related to Fitzwilliam. Through her efforts he was liberated and allowed to return to England.

No better go-between could have been found than this George Fitzwilliam who, after being sworn to secrecy and taken into the plot, was despatched to Spain to make further offers to the King of assistance from Hawkins in return for the liberation of his men. This the King

would not grant until he had received some proof from the incarcerated Queen of Scots that Hawkins was above all suspicion. Fitzwilliam then returned to England and, after an interview with Burghley and Hawkins, was allowed to visit Mary Stuart. The result of this visit was that she wrote a letter to Philip in which she vouched for the honesty of Hawkins, and also begged he would liberate the prisoners. With this letter she sent, by Fitzwilliam, a present to the Duchess of Feria of a gold-bound service book.

At last the Spanish King felt that he had all the assurance he needed, and consented to enlist the English Admiral under his banner ; and it was agreed that Hawkins should desert his post in the Channel the moment the rising took place in England, and that concurrently the Duke of Alva should launch his army against the South Coast, while the Duke of Medina Celi approached with the Spanish fleet from Spain.

The prisoners at Seville, those who still survived starvation, disease and the rack, were liberated, each one being given with his freedom five Spanish gold crowns and a passage in a merchant ship to England.

Hawkins, for himself, received a patent of nobility, whereby he became an *hidalgo* of Spain ; an honour which must have sat oddly on the shoulders of the honest Devon merchant, who in a letter to Burghley refers contemptuously to the “ very great titles and honours from the King, from which God deliver me.”

Not only this, but he was granted a full pardon for his indiscretions in the Indies, and a promise of a sum of money sufficient to maintain twelve ships and sixteen hundred men for two months.

Fitzwilliam arrived back with these glad tidings on the 4th of September. To crown all, evidence had at last come to Burghley’s hand of the perfidy of Norfolk, who was arrested and sent to the Tower. Several of

the chief conspirators were likewise seized, and the rack did the rest. The whole plot was out and the game up. Ridolfi himself escaped, being in Brussels at the time, arranging the final details of the invasion with the Duke of Alva.

Thus ended this extraordinary game of bluff, where a Devonshire sea-captain set his wits against those of Kings, Councillors and Diplomatists and, playing them at their own game, defeated them. Three years before, when he had said farewell to his men on the Mexican Coast, his last words had been that he would leave no stone unturned to bring them back to England. It had taken a long time to carry out that promise, but, like the true man he was, John Hawkins had never forgotten nor despaired.

It might be supposed that the part played by John Hawkins in the Ridolfi plot would have been seized upon by his enemies to cast doubt upon his loyalty. If this was so there is little evidence to prove it. At all events the Queen and those of her Councillors who were in the secret still believed firmly in his honesty.

That the citizens of Plymouth had no doubts about him they proved by re-electing John Hawkins to represent their town in Parliament in 1572. A period of peace now began, which lasted, with certain remissions, for many years. When the hounds of war were out, John Hawkins was the man to lead them, but at other times employment was found for him at home. Already, at the age of 40, he had become a national hero, and an indispensable servant of the State. The younger school of seamen, of which Francis Drake was to prove the most brilliant example, was still in a stage of development, learning their profession from the older man. At this period Hawkins was looked up to as the greatest naval commander of this or any other country. Had not duty kept him at home he would have been out

again, cruising in the Caribbean Sea, or "trafficking" on the Spanish Main.

Although England was at peace with Spain and France, it was well known that at any moment a twist of the diplomatic situation might occur and, without warning, an invasion of England might follow. For this reason Admiral Hawkins must remain at home, for in case of trouble it was to him that the country looked for protection. To the Spaniards the name of "Juan Achines" spelled respect and fear. As long as he was ready to sail from Plymouth any question of a sudden raid or invasion of England was not to be lightly undertaken.

Of Hawkins as a Member of Parliament we know nothing. This is not, perhaps, to be wondered at, since he was ever a man of action rather than one of words. Much of his time was now spent in London, no doubt sitting as a silent listener at the Councils at Westminster, or else in his office, superintending his numerous mercantile interests.

It was in the streets of London that he met with an adventure that nearly lost the country one of her most valuable citizens.

It happened on an October morning in 1573 that, as Hawkins was riding down the Strand in company with Sir William Winter, a man rushed at him and stabbed him with a dagger. The bystanders seized the ruffian who was dragged off to jail.

On examination he proved to be a certain Peter Burchet, a lawyer of the Middle Temple, and a fanatical Puritan. It seemed that on the morning of the attack Burchet had attended a sermon which had affected him strangely. On leaving the church he was overheard to mutter "Shall I do it! what, shall I do it! Why, then, I will do it!" The deed he contemplated was the murder of the new Court favourite, Sir Christopher

Hatton, who was strongly suspected of being a Papist. This man was famous for his dandyism and gorgeous clothing, which may account for the assassin's mistake, as John Hawkins was always arrayed in the very latest fashion.

For several days the life of Hawkins was despaired of, and he was advised to make his will. The Queen, deeply shocked at the accident to her old and loyal friend, sent her own personal surgeons to attend him. However, the man who had survived tropical fevers, poisoned arrows and Spanish guns, was not ordained to die by the knife of a mad assassin, nor at the hands of an Elizabethan surgeon, and in due time he recovered of his wound.

As for the demented lawyer, Burchet, the Queen was furious and was for having him executed forthwith. The question of his sanity carried no weight with her, nor did it save him from the gallows when his trial came to be held.

That the assassin was out of his mind there can be no doubt. Many witnesses could have been called to testify that he had shown signs of insanity for some while before the assault. He had been heard on many occasions to threaten the life of Hatton, who had been warned to be on his guard.

One witness gave evidence that he travelled up to London from the West Country with Burchet, who made "many phantasticall speeches and doings whereby they might perceive that he was not well in his witts all the whole journey hitherwards." He was tried by the Bishop of London, at Lollard's Tower, not on the charge of attempted murder, but for holding heretical opinions. After recanting these beliefs, he was handed over to the Civil Authorities, but before they had time to deal with his case the prisoner, who was incarcerated in the Tower, seized a billet from the fire in his cell and with it slew his jailer.

Next day Burchet stood his trial for murder, and the jury of sound Westminster Burgesses wasted no time in coming to their verdict of guilty. This was in the days before learned evidence was forthcoming from mental experts, nor were criminal psychologists and the like allowed to cheat the gallows of their prey. A murderer was a murderer, and the best way to deal with one was to hang him.

Although at this period John Hawkins lived and had his headquarters in London, he still carried on business with his brother William at Plymouth, and in most public contracts for the town we find one or both brothers taking an interest.

One of these was the contract for grinding corn for the small-holders of Plymouth. The brothers bought a house to which the corn was brought to be weighed before it was ground, and they bought also a horse and hired a man whose duty it was to go from cottage to cottage to collect the sacks.

Another source of profit to the firm of William and John Hawkins, was that of dealing in the plunder captured from Catholic ships in the Channel. When the Sea Beggars or even nondescript pirates caught a cargo-boat in the neighbourhood, they brought the prize to Plymouth, and sold the plunder to the highest bidder. Thus prize after prize reached the Devon port, and most of them fell to the brothers Hawkins. The lawfulness of some of these seizures at sea was very questionable, and it often happened the owners would bring an action against the English merchants who bought the cargo, to compel them to disgorge.

The Hawkinses appear as defendants in several such cases tried before the Admiralty Court. One took place in November, 1573, when two London partners, Richard May and Arnold Miles, complained to the court that John Hawkins had bought and taken away

some property belonging to them. It seemed that they were the insurers of a cargo belonging to a Portuguese merchant named Sebastian de Salvago, who despatched a cargo from Viana, near Oporto, to Rouen. On the voyage the ship was seized by some English pirates, who took her to Plymouth, where John Hawkins bought the goods. The result of the action was far from satisfactory to the insurers, since the judges found in favour of the defendant.

A month later, John Hawkins was again the defendant in another case brought before the same court, by a Spanish merchant, Jeronimus Lopez. Hawkins was accused of having "redeemed" from some pirates goods worth £675. This case did not go so well for Hawkins, who was ordered to hand back £520, but was allowed to keep £155 for his expenses.

The Hawkins brothers occasionally found their bread buttered on the other side, in these interloping transactions, as happened when their own ships were taken by French pirates. This occurred in 1572 when a ship of theirs, on her way with a cargo to Hamburg, was caught by French rovers in the Downs. Another ship belonging to Hawkins, the "Angel," was seized in La Rochelle harbour by one Nicholas Brewnes, a Frenchman, and there was no end of litigation over the matter before it was put right.

Many a time the Hawkinses hired out their ships to English or foreign merchants. Thus in 1577, four ships of theirs, the "William," "Saloman," "John" and "Paul," were chartered by an Italian, Horatio Palavicini, to carry cargoes of alum from Genoa to London. Alum, which was only to be procured from some mines owned by the Pope, was used in the manufacture of cloth, and was therefore a very valuable monopoly for his Holiness.

A certain amount of trade had been carried on, *sub rosa*,

by English ships in the West Indies until the San Juan de Ulua affair. The immediate result of that disaster was to turn the peaceful trader into a ruthless corsair. The most famous, or victorious, of these sea-rovers was Francis Drake. Had Drake been a man to make excuses, which he never was, he might have argued that the Spaniards had, by treachery, stolen his property, and that he was perfectly justified in using force to reimburse himself for his losses. The principle that two wrongs make a right was recognized in the sixteenth century, and was considered to justify the seizing of foreign goods to make up for previous losses.

Drake, like many another Devon ship-master, looked upon Spanish property as fair game, particularly when met with in the West Indies. It was in the year 1572 that he left Plymouth in the "Dragon," a sloop of a hundred tons, and two small pinnaces. Not a word nor hint did he let escape as to his plans. Hawkins, always a stickler for the letter of the law, used to discuss his plans with the Authorities in London, and by so doing allowed the Spaniards to get wind of most of his projects well before he started. The Spaniards heard nothing of Drake's plans until the day when, in the Panama jungle, the treasure convoy on its way across the peninsula to Nombre de Dios was suddenly held up by a gang of Englishmen and robbed. The success of this exploit fired the imagination of every sailor in England, and many a ship sailed to the West Indies to seek its fortune in the same manner.

Commenting on the eagerness with which the English at this time took part in these raids on the Spanish Main, Camden wrote: "Incredible it is with how great alacrity they put to sea, and how readily they exercised piracy against the Spanish."

For very good reason the commanders of these exploits did not rush into print when they returned to

England, knowing that the less said about their ventures the better ; and this is why we have, in most cases, so little first-hand information about their doings. One exception is Francis Drake who, after the *Nombre de Dios* exploit, became a national hero ; and his deeds of daring became the topic of conversation for many a day. The courage of many of these—why boggle at the word ?—pirates was astounding. There was Captain Gilbert Horsey for example, who sailed out of Plymouth, one November day in 1574, in command of the “John,” a tiny vessel of 18 tons. In this little craft, carrying a crew of twenty-five Devon sailors and victuals for five months, Captain Horsey, quite unabashed, set off across the Atlantic to wage war on America. Perhaps he was encouraged by the formidable armament carried by the “John.” This consisted of three cast-iron guns, the largest a 3-pounder, ten bases which would throw a half-pound shot, and a barrel and a half of powder.

Off the coast of Barbary they ran across two large Spanish ships laden with salt. Large, that is, compared with the little “John,” since the burden of each was 50 tons. Horsey seized them both, let the Spanish crews go home in one, while the other, into which he transferred some of the crew of the “John,” he kept. This exploit was quite in the true spirit of the pirate, whose plan was always to take a bigger and better ship than his own and use her until one even better should come to hand. The new ship, accompanied by the “John,” then crossed the Atlantic, arriving eventually off the Isthmus of Darien. Horsey was following the example of Drake, for he got in touch with the friendly Indian tribe, the Comaroons, who had helped Drake to help himself to the Spanish treasure the year before. An unfortunate set-back to the adventurers happened while Captain Horsey was on shore discussing plans with the Indians. A big Spanish ship came

down the coast and recaptured the prize brought from Barbary, in which were eight Englishmen. A witness of this outrage spoke of it afterwards with natural indignation, declaring "she was violently taken from them by the Spaniards." This unfortunate incident in no way discouraged the seventeen survivors in the "John." True, the plan for a surprise attack with the Comaroons was spoiled since the Spaniards were now on the alert. Instead they sailed westwards until they fell in with a small Spanish craft of 10 tons. The English soon had her taken, to find a valuable cargo on board of bars of gold and silver, to say nothing of four large jewels of gold set with pearls.

Continuing to cruise, they made towards Cartagena, taking two small craft on their way, laden not with gold, but with victuals, which by this time were more valuable to them than gold or precious stones. They next tried their fortune off the Spanish Main, and soon met and robbed a Spanish pinnace of four bags of gold dust and nuggets as well. One more prize fell to them, in the Bay of Honduras. This was a Spanish caravel of 22 tons, laden with Canary wines, oil and Spanish money. They took, of course, all the money, but only half the wine; the other half they gave back, with the caravel, to the rightful owners. This surprising piece of generosity was probably due to the fact that the little "John" was already loaded down to her decks, and the season of tempests was at hand when wise sailors steered eastwards.

The enterprising Captain Horseley, unlike so many other men bent on a similar undertaking, knew when to stop. With enough plunder on board to make every one of the fifteen men on the ship rich for life he turned homewards, arriving safely back at Plymouth in June, 1575.

Even then a little diplomacy was required, for there

were sure to be awkward inquiries by officious persons anxious to know how he came by all his wealth; but a present of £10 to the Lord Admiral's officer at Plymouth made everything run smoothly in this quarter. Horseley got into communication with John Tipton of London, the owner of the "John," and then sailed up Channel to Arundel where he was met by the owner, and the treasure was landed in secrecy, and thus ended their daring voyage.

Many other filibustering expeditions of this sort took place during these years.

There was the voyage of the two ships, the "Ragged Staff" and the "Bear," which set out from Bristol to try their fortune on the Spanish Main. Some of these enterprises ended in failure or disaster, as in the case of John Oxenham, whose story is set forth in Kingsley's *Westward Ho!*

Although John Hawkins himself took no actual part in any of these expeditions to America, he sent out many of his own ships and crews, and was the promoter of many buccaneering exploits.

Two years later Drake was off again, this time on a voyage that was to become one of the most famous in the history of navigation. This was in 1577 when he began his voyage to the Straits of Magellan, which was to end by his circumnavigation of the world. Many other sea captains were rising to fame, among them Humphrey Gilbert who, a year after Drake left, took out a fleet from Plymouth to make an attempt on the home-coming Spanish plate-fleet.

During all these years of high adventure, Hawkins had been working on shore, either at Plymouth or London. He found much to occupy his energy and talents. Not only had he ships at sea, sailing to and from various foreign ports, but he had warehouses, where cargoes were bought and sold, and shipyards,

at which he supervised the building of his own vessels. Whatever hopes he may have held of being granted leave to head another expedition to the Spanish Main were dispelled at the end of 1577, when he received an important appointment which was to keep him closely occupied on shore for the next ten years.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE TUDOR NAVY



LTHOUGH England was a maritime country with a large proportion of her inhabitants winning their livelihood on the sea as fishermen or sailors, it was not until the reign of the Tudors that a permanent fighting Navy came into being.

Before Henry VII came to the throne, the Royal Navy consisted merely of a few ships belonging to the King, which in time of war were reinforced by merchant ships, purchased or hired by the State for the period of national danger.

Naval warfare had hitherto consisted of little more than raids by the English on the coasts of France, or similar raids on England by the French. Beyond this the Navy was used to transport soldiers to France or Scotland, and neither of these countries was, as a rule, strong enough at sea to be able to offer serious opposition. It was customary for an English army which marched against Scotland, to proceed along the East Coast, accompanied by the fleet which sailed off the shore by slow stages, so as to protect the army from attack from the sea, and at the same time to act as carriers for the heavy transport.

A little police work fell occasionally to the King's ships, as when some nest of pirates in the Scilly Islands, the south of Ireland or Scotland became so unbearable as to call for extermination.

Although it was to Henry VIII that England owed most for her well-organized and efficient Navy, it was his father who really originated the Royal Navy, which developed into such a powerful force by the time of the Spanish Armada.

Henry VII took a personal interest in his ships and his seamen. He did much to assist his son to put the Navy on an organized footing by leaving a well-filled treasury, and by passing several acts to encourage shipping.

Thus when in 1509 the latter monarch came to the throne, he inherited a Navy consisting mostly of small but well found ships. In the first ten years of his reign he built, captured or bought no fewer than thirty ships to add to the Royal Navy. Not being content to go on building ships on the old pattern, he brought from Italy skilled shipbuilders and workmen who introduced many improvements in naval architecture. These additions to his old fleet enabled him to be master of the "narrows sea," and so to invade the coast of France at his pleasure. A large part of the money procured from the sale of the monasteries at the dissolution was spent on the Navy and on fortifying the port towns. Further, new dockyards were made at Portsmouth, Woolwich, Deptford and other places, and put in thorough working order. The management of the new dockyards was put in the charge of the Trinity House which was founded in March, 1513, by the King, who issued a "Licence to found a Guild in honour of the Holy Trinity and St. Clement in the Church of Deptford Stroud, for reformation of the Navy, lately much decayed by admission of young men without experience, and of Scots, Flemings and Frenchmen as loadsmen." These loadsmen were skilled seamen who understood how to throw the lead, and from whom were selected the masters and pilots.

This duty of examining candidates for the rank of

mate is still carried out by the Trinity House, who also to this day look after the upkeep of the buoys and lights around the coast. Henry VIII's most famous ship was the "Mary Rose," described by Admiral Sir Edward Howard, whose flagship she was in 1513, as "the flower of all ships that ever sailed." This ship was sunk at Spithead some thirty years later, and only a few years ago, when some of the guns were dredged up, many of them were found to be breech-loaders.

It was during Henry VII's reign that the most profound development took place in the history of the Navy and naval warfare. From earliest days an engagement at sea had been a contest between two opposing bodies of soldiers, who fought from two ships grappled alongside each other, their arms being bows and arrows or small guns, which were used to kill each other and were quite useless for sinking ships.

Henry VIII introduced the big gun, which was designed to destroy and sink the enemy's ships, which could be done without actually approaching within very short range.

It was the failure of the Spaniards to recognize and prepare for this development which brought about the ultimate disaster to the Armada in 1588.

When Henry VIII died in 1547 he left to his son Edward a fleet of fifty-three vessels, a larger and better equipped Navy than this country had ever known before. But, in the two short reigns which followed, the Navy rapidly deteriorated through neglect, so that by the time Queen Elizabeth came to the throne, in 1559, the Royal Navy was reduced to some twenty-nine fighting ships. During Mary's reign France was too exhausted to be feared as a serious foe at sea, while her marriage to King Philip of Spain had put out of court the only other nation which was likely to be a source of danger to this country at sea.

Thus it happened that, when the Navy was suddenly called upon to assist the besieged English garrison at Calais against the attacks of the Duke of Guise in 1558, it was found so unprepared for war that it was impossible to get the ships ready or to collect crews to man them in time.

Although the number of Royal ships had dropped from fifty-three in Henry VII's time to but twenty-nine when Elizabeth ascended the throne, it must be remembered that in the latter's reign the average size of the ships had been almost doubled.

In the time of Henry VII and Henry VIII ships were used for what was practically coasting only ; while in Elizabeth's the bigger, stronger and more seaworthy ships, manned by more skilful seamen, were accustomed to go on long voyages to the East and to America, and actually to circumnavigate the globe.

The crews of these ships were not only vastly better trained, but whereas in Henry VII's time the ship's company consisted more of soldiers than sailors, by the middle of Elizabeth's reign, thanks to Hawkins and Drake, the sailors far outnumbered the soldiers. Certain inventions and improvements had likewise taken place, such as the perfection of the chain pump, the introduction of top-masts, and the practice of weighing anchors by means of a capstan instead of the old laborious method of hauling on a rope. These and many other improvements were due to the ingenuity of John Hawkins. The names of the various guns carried on an Elizabethan warship are bewildering. Besides Cannon and Demi-cannon, there were Sakers, Mynions, Falcons, Falconets, Port-pece Hulls, and Port-pece Chambers, and many others with equally fantastic titles. The quality of the guns was good, some being made of brass, others of iron. The practice of casting iron guns, introduced in 1550, made it possible to turn them out in much larger numbers.

No doubt many of the smaller guns or “murthering pieces” were little more than duck guns, and were placed in suitable positions on the decks to “brown into” boarding parties of enemy seamen.

From the days of King John until the reign of Henry VIII the management of the King’s Navy, both administrative and financial, had been entrusted to members of the Royal household. It is known that King John appointed William of Wrotham, Archdeacon of Taunton, to be “keeper of the king’s ships, galleys and sea-ports,” and for many years after this it was customary to appoint one of the King’s clerks, always an ecclesiastic, to this post. It was the duty of this official, in time of peace, to act as the King’s agent, in hiring out his ships of war to merchants for their trading voyages ; and, in those days when piracy was rampant, it was a form of insurance to have the use of a fighting ship to go to sea on a trading venture.

An example of the merchantman turned pirate was that of Sir Andrew Barton, a Scottish sailor of the early sixteenth century. Having been robbed by the Portuguese, he procured letters of marque from King James IV, which authorized him to indemnify himself for his loss out of any Portuguese ships he should meet with at sea. Barton, armed with his sovereign’s authority, and in two well-found and well-armed ships, the “Jenny Perwin” and the “Lion,” set about getting back his lost property, or rather the equivalent to it. But every ship Barton met with, at sea, was to him a Portuguese. In this way he plundered English, French and Flemish ships with equal heartiness, and to his great personal gain. At last he became such a nuisance to his neighbours that the Earl of Surrey, at his own expense, sent out two ships, commanded by his two sons, to deal with the Scottish pirate. Eventually the rover was overtaken, and, in the fierce engagement which followed, killed.

In time of war the Keeper of the Navy would exercise the Royal prerogative to impress any merchant ship that might be required for the defence of the realm. These ships would, if possible, be taken over with their crews, and the King would then put on board a military officer and a body of soldiers, who did the actual fighting ; while the management and navigation of the ship were left to the sailors.

During Henry VIII's reign the Royal Navy was administered by him, with the assistance of a Clerk of the Ships, under whom were various temporary officials. This system ended in 1545 with the death of William Gonson, who was Clerk for the long space of twenty-one years. The old form of single administration was changed and elaborated at Gonson's death, and a permanent Board was formed consisting of several high officials, each of whom was responsible for his own particular branch of the Navy, which had now become so large and its organization so complicated. At the accession of Queen Elizabeth, Benjamin Gonson, second son of William Gonson, was made Treasurer to the Navy. It was his daughter, Katherine, whom John Hawkins married as his first wife.

But the time was approaching when the Navy was to have a new Treasurer, one who was to wield a new broom and make such a Navy as England had never before possessed.

Lord Burghley, with his finger ever on the pulse of European politics, was well aware that the period of peace between Spain and England was drawing to a close. At best it had been but a precarious friendship, a pretence kept up by the sovereigns of the two nations, each desiring to put off the evil day which both foresaw was inevitable, but which neither was yet prepared to face.

From the English point of view the war of liberation

being waged in the Netherlands was far from satisfactory ; vast sums of money and large numbers of English soldiers had been poured out to help that small but valiant nation. If this assistance continued it might well drive the King of Spain to exasperation, and lead to direct retaliation on England.

Sedition and rebellion was being preached by young English Catholics, trained at the seminary at Douai. These apostles of Rome spread over the whole length and breadth of England, urging, in whispers, their listeners to return to the true fold, and to throw off their allegiance to the Queen, an allegiance that no longer held since the Edict of the Pope, which declared Elizabeth to be a heretic.

At the same time the English nation, newly awakened to a sense of naval power, with a good fleet manned by skilful sailors, and with more wealth in gold than ever before, began to demand expansion. Spain was drawing vast wealth from her colonies in the West, Portugal growing rich from her possessions in Africa, Brazil and the East.

What right had the Pope, the enemy of their Queen, their race and their faith, to allot the whole of the new-found world to these two Catholic powers, and to exclude all other nations ?

Spain was by now no longer the terrifying bogey she once had been. Too often in recent years had English ships, manned by English crews, met, fought and defeated larger Spanish vessels.

The country, already becoming ambitious for expansion, had been deeply stirred by the recent departure of Francis Drake to the South Seas. What the object of this voyage was, no one but himself knew, but Drake was the people's hero, and whatever he undertook was certain to be successful, and to bring glory and perhaps rich rewards to his countrymen.

If war with Spain was inevitable, and no one foresaw this more clearly than William Cecil, then the country must be prepared to meet the danger. Preparation meant, above all things, the building, equipping and manning of an efficient Navy. More ships must be built, and not only more but better ships, vessels that were fast, well-armed, and fit to undertake long voyages.

The present members of the Board of Admiralty were many of them old and trusted servants of the State. There was Sir William Winter, who had been appointed Master of Ordnance and Surveyor of the Ships twenty years before. His younger brother, George Winter, had held the office of Clerk to the Ships for close on as many years.

William Holstocke, another veteran official, had spent the best part of his life in the service, as Comptroller of the Ships, having been appointed in 1561. The Senior Master Shipwright was Peter Pett, who had received his appointment from King Henry VIII.

More important than any of these was Benjamin Gonson, the Treasurer of the Navy, who continued to hold his office until his death, in 1578. This office was one of great responsibility and trust, and called for considerable administrative ability.

It was to Katherine, the daughter of Benjamin Gonson, that John Hawkins was married in the year 1559. No doubt young Hawkins was well known to his future father-in-law, for the latter was a member of the company of London merchant-adventurers who financed the slaving voyage to the Guinea Coast.

In 1577 a patent was issued appointing Hawkins to share with his father-in-law the office of Treasurer of the Navy ; which carried with it a promise that the younger man should take over the post himself at the death of the elder. Already Hawkins had unofficially assisted his father-in-law in his work, so that by the

time he took office he had nothing to learn about his duties.

No doubt Benjamin Gonson was not sorry to shift some of his irksome labour from his own on to younger shoulders, for he had held the post for twenty-eight years and was growing old.

A year later Gonson died and Hawkins became sole Treasurer to the Navy, and he must very soon have appreciated the full meaning of his late chief's words, spoken a year before, "I shall pluck out a thorn from my foot and put it in yours."

It was not long before Hawkins realized what an arduous and difficult task he had embarked upon. He now found himself, at the age of forty-six, in charge of a Board of elderly gentlemen who, for many years, had run their business as they thought best, and with little or no interference or supervision. All of a sudden they found themselves confronted by an energetic and ambitious reformer, a man who could not be bribed and would allow no corrupt practices in naval affairs. Hitherto it had been a recognized custom for office holders to make for themselves what they could out of their sinecures, and the members of the Navy Board differed in no way from other Government officials in feathering each his own nest, and in filling many of the subordinate posts with their relations and friends. Then there came this new broom, with his new ideas about contracts and estimates ; with his passion for organization and his tireless industry, upsetting everybody and everything.

To bring about reforms in such a Board would have been an impossible task, even to a man like John Hawkins, had he not had behind him the full confidence of the Secretary of State. As long ago as 1571, Burghley had made inquiries and satisfied himself that the Queen's Navy was rotten with neglect and corruption.

Jobbery was rampant from top to bottom. Obviously a strong hand was needed to clean out the Augean stable, and the right man for the task must possess several qualifications.

First and foremost he must be a practical sailor, with experience of seamanship and sea-fighting. There were plenty such in the latter half of the sixteenth century, as Frobisher, Gilbert, Drake and the Fenners. But the new broom must also be a sound administrator, and must understand the secrets of trade, so as to be able to deal with the various contractors. If he knew something of the business of shipbuilding, then so much the better. Without such knowledge the best of sea captains would be at the mercy of the wily old members of the Board.

In John Hawkins, Lord Burghley found the very man he was in search of. Here was a man highly skilled in seamanship, who had sailed his own ships on long voyages, even to the other side of the wide Atlantic. None of the other members of the Board had sailed beyond the home waters, or at the farthest the Baltic or the Canary Islands.

Hawkins held views about ships of war, which were far in advance of his time and of his colleagues. Added to this he had behind him nearly thirty years of experience of trade, shipbuilding, and the handling of men. Thus it was that the choice of new Treasurer fell on the successful Plymouth sea captain and merchant.

The new broom lost no time in getting to work. Within a month of his appointment, Hawkins had presented to Lord Burghley a secret report on the inner working of the Navy Board. This document, which is still in existence, may be seen and studied in the Lansdowne MSS. now in the British Museum.

It is headed "Abuses in the Admiralty touching Her Majesty's Navy, exhibited by Mr. Hawkins." It

proves on reading it to be a scathing exposure of the corrupt methods of his colleagues on the Board.

Economy was the text of the sermon he preached. To begin with the writer set out to show that the present cost of keeping and repairing the Royal ships in harbour was £6000 a year. He claimed that the same could and should be done as well, or better, for £4000.

He quoted facts and figures which proved that Royal ships had been built at a cost of £2200, but that the Queen had been charged £4000. One of the most grave accusations made referred to the purchasing of stores.

For example, on one occasion the Queen had been charged with the sum of £9000 for timber for building ships, when actually only £4000 worth had been used in her service. Where the balance of £5000 had disappeared to no one explained, though no doubt it had gone to line the pockets of the voracious members of the Board.

According to Hawkins every member was tarred with the same brush, but one in particular stood out above the rest in corruption and theft, and this was Sir William Winter, the senior member. After roundly accusing Sir William of dishonesty, Hawkins went into particulars to prove the charge. Under the heading "Matters that touch Sir William Winter particularly," he brought to light some very damning evidence.

First of all there was the case of the "Mary Fortune," a ship which Winter built for himself, almost wholly out of timber paid for by the Queen for the building of the Royal ships. Another of Winter's own ships, the "Edward" was, he declared, built entirely of Royal timber. One of the Queen's ships, the "Foresight," was built of timber which was sold to her Majesty, in spite of it having been already bought by her only a little while before.

Winter had also built private wharves as well as ships with the Queen's timber. Certain ships, decayed and in need of repair, were charged for as having been repaired, although not a penny had been spent on them. The "Pelican," the ship in which Francis Drake had set out to the South Seas, was built of nothing but the Queen's timber, and for this Winter charged as if the material had been his own. These are but a few of the glaring instances of Winter's dishonesty brought to the notice of Burghley by the "new broom." Although Winter was the arch-defrauder, the rot had spread right through the service. Many of the minor posts were held by relatives of his or of other senior officials ; and some of the clerks were actually being paid their wages twice over. Winter had in his gift the appointing of all the boatswains, gunners and pursers in the Navy, a requisite which "all reduced to his profit."

It is not certain if this report on the Navy scandals was written by Hawkins and presented to Burghley just after or just before his appointment as Treasurer. It is possible, and quite likely, that the clever Hawkins, having drawn up his report, gave it to Burghley at the very moment when he knew another appointment to the Board was to be made.

Whether the report was made before or after his appointment is not a matter of great importance. What is evident is that the Authorities believed Hawkins' statements, because they not only gave him the appointment, but a year later placed in his hands powers far exceeding those which his predecessor in the same office had held. At the same time it is remarkable that neither William Winter nor any other profiteer on the Board was dismissed his office.

In Tudor times it was not considered a crime for a Government official to make for himself what he could out of his post. Out of all the more important members

of the Board, only two escaped Hawkins' accusation of jobbery, and these were the two master shipwrights, Peter Pett and Mathew Baker.

Under the new arrangement John Hawkins, with the two honest shipwrights, was to carry out the ordinary work of the dockyards for an agreed sum which was to be paid annually. The rest of the Board were to receive regular salaries for their work, and were, in future, to have no finger in the financial pie. In this no uncertain way did Burghley show his complete confidence in the man he had chosen for the highest post in the administration of the Navy.

Hawkins soon got to work to bring the Navy up to a pitch of excellence previously unknown. After going into all the accounts and estimates, Hawkins gave a definite undertaking to save £4000 every year, and at the same time to provide better ships, more efficiently equipped, than his predecessors had done.

How he kept his promise was to be shown ten years later when the Naval force of England set forth to oppose the Invincible Armada of Spain.

As can well be imagined, the latest addition to the Navy Board was far from being popular with his colleagues. The happy years were gone when pickings, and handsome pickings too, could be made and no questions asked. Now all was changed. The new Treasurer saw to it that those in receipt of a salary, however highly placed they might be, gave full value for their wage, and got from the State nothing more than was rightly due to them. The member who showed most discontent and gave most trouble was the one hardest hit by the change, Sir William Winter. To get him out of the way for a while he was sent off to sea in 1580, in command of a squadron to cruise off the Irish coast. This proved to be an unprofitable post since it offered no hope of prize-money, nor even of glory.

Probably the most striking result following the appointment of Hawkins was the change brought about in the type of warship. Instead of continuing to build the old floating fortresses, vessels up to a thousand tons, of vast depth and beam, made yet more unwieldy by high turrets and forecastles, a new model was evolved.

This was a galleon-built ship of moderate size, between three and four hundred tons. The new vessels were longer, narrower and more shallow than the old ships and were much faster sailors and more handy to manœuvre. It is true that several ships of the new class had been built before Hawkins was officially in charge, but there is little doubt that he was largely responsible for their design and building, through his father-in-law, Benjamin Gonson. The finest of these new ships was the "Revenge" of 450 tons, which was completed in 1577 and which was considered by Drake to be the finest man-of-war ever built ; indeed he chose her for his own ship a few years later, when the Spanish Armada invaded the narrow seas.

During the first few years of Hawkins' treasurership, there was not money enough to build many new ships, so he had to content himself with adapting some of the old ones to the new pattern.

Thus the "Antelope," the "Golden Lion" and the "Nonpareil" were put through a process of "new-building." This term was given a very wide meaning ; for, when a ship was broken up and her large timbers used to build into a new ship, the latter was christened with the old name and said to be "new-built."

Hawkins found much to occupy him in repairing the old Government dockyards and in constructing new ones. These were at Chatham, Weymouth, the Isle of Wight, Dartmouth, Plymouth and Falmouth. There was no branch of the naval service which escaped the attention and unflagging energy of the new Treasurer.

The defences of Chatham he found on investigation to be insufficient to keep out an invading enemy force, so he built a new fort at Sheerness, which would protect the shipyards and town from an enemy fleet coming up the Medway.

Another, and very costly undertaking, was the making of a great iron chain which could be drawn across the river, from bank to bank, opposite the castle at Upnor.

The cost of this chain, including the carriage from London, was £250. The lighters to support it, with their moorings, cost another £360. All these preparations, involving much money and labour, were made with the one object of keeping out the Spaniards when the time should come for their invasion of England, a danger which became more apparent every year.

After the fortification of Chatham, the defence of Dover was taken in hand. This port was the base for the Channel fleet in time of war, but owing to the strong drift of the shingle the entrance had become choked up. The two master shipwrights, on the advice of the engineers, contrived an ingenious plan to get rid of the silt. They dammed up the little Dover stream in a reservoir until a good head of water was collected, and then, by suddenly emptying it, the rush of water from above washed away the shingle that obstructed the entrance. This engineering feat took both time and labour, but by 1584 it was completed and when put into use was found to work satisfactorily.

The ingenuity of Hawkins was apparent in many ways. Amongst his inventions, adapted by the Navy, was a "cunning stratagem of boarding nettings" which were used to protect ships when in action, from enemy boarding parties. One of his most valuable novelties was the chain pump. By this contrivance a ship could be pumped dry of water in far less time than by the old hand pump. He also invented the capstan, by which

an anchor would be drawn in-board more quickly and easily than had been the case when the hawser was pulled in by hand. In many ways Hawkins was in advance of his time and in none more so than in his treatment of his sailors. Even in his earlier voyages, it was recorded as a matter of note that he fed his crews better than other sea captains did ; also that he took fewer men with him on his long voyages and brought home a larger proportion than did other commanders. When Hawkins became head of the Navy Board he brought his theories into practice. In 1585, on his advice, the sailors had their wages raised from six shillings and eightpence to ten shillings a month, since he maintained that by paying the sailors well the service would attract better and more capable men, and thus smaller crews made up of efficient men would do the work usually requiring less capable but larger crews. Hawkins summed up the whole argument in a nutshell by the terse remark that the higher pay would attract “ Such as could make shift for themselves and keep themselves clean without vermin.”

These early years as Treasurer were without doubt most difficult ones for John Hawkins, and called for all his patience, diplomacy and courage. His duties were numerous and varied, covering every detail of the management and maintenance of the fleet. So greatly did Hawkins win favour with the Queen that she appointed him Treasurer of Her Majesty’s Marine Causes, and shortly afterwards he succeeded Holstocke as Comptroller of the Navy. These marks of confidence and trust were no mere empty honours, for they meant more work and more responsibility on his shoulders.

Amongst his duties Hawkins had to assure himself that the stores were neither wasted nor pilfered, and were kept in good order. To him fell the responsibility of examining and passing estimates for the building of

new warships, and to see that the builders kept to the contracts. He it was who paid the crews and dockyard hands their wages.

It did not make his task any lighter to have to contend with a Board of disgruntled and indignant fellow officers, all of whom were his seniors in the service and in age. Instead of receiving their help in his reforms, he met with nothing but opposition at every turn. In addition to all his other troubles his health began to fail. In a letter he wrote about this time he confessed : " My sickness doth continually abide with me, and every second day I have a fit, if I look abroad in the air but one hour ; I can hardly recover it in six days."

The description of his symptoms suggests tertian ague, or malaria contracted, as likely as not, on his voyages to the West Coast of Africa.

One of the first results of the new Treasurer's efforts at reformation was to give birth to various rumours, casting doubt on his honesty. These innuendoes grew so serious as to compel the attention of the Government, who in 1583, by order of the Privy Council, appointed a commission to inquire into the state of the Navy, and into the truth, if any, of the alleged abuses.

The five members of the Board of Enquiry were Lord Burghley, the Lord Admiral, the Lord Chamberlain, Sir Francis Walsingham and the Lord High Chancellor. To these principal commissioners was given a list of well-known names, from which to select sub-commissioners to assist them. Amongst these were many well-known sea captains, such as Francis Drake, Martin Frobisher, Fulke Greville and Walter Raleigh. Backed up by such names as these, any decisions or recommendations of the committee were bound to carry weight with, and have the whole-hearted confidence of, the nation at large.

The commissioners were instructed to make a careful

and full inquiry into the work done in the Navy since Hawkins took over the administration in 1579.

Particularly close investigations were ordered to be made into the rumour which had reached Her Majesty as to "frauds and deceits" said to have been committed by certain high officials in the Navy Board, in the handling of the timber and plank contracts. Also special inquiry as to the gross overcharging for repairs of the Royal ships.

The range of the inquiry was to be a wide one, and every branch of the service was to be reported on, including a survey of all storehouses, stores and wharves.

The real object of this searching inquisition was to put John Hawkins on his trial. The commission had to decide whether or not the "new broom" had proved himself efficient and honest during his four years of office as Administrator.

After a long and searching investigation, the commission published its report, which must have been gratifying reading to Hawkins.

The Navy was declared to be in an efficient state in every way, and, although no direct references were made to the charges of dishonesty, the fact that not only was the Treasurer retained in office but was given increased powers shows that their confidence in him was unshaken.

In spite of the findings of the Royal Commission, the enemies of the Treasurer still continued to spread rumours about him. So annoying did these become that in April, 1584, Hawkins wrote a long letter on the subject to Burghley, which throws a strong light on the relationship between himself and his accusers on the Board. As the letter is a typical one from his pen, it may be quoted at some length. It runs :

" My duty in right humble manner remembered unto your good Lordship,

After it had pleased Her Majesty to commit

this office of Treasurer of the Navy unto me, I have endeavoured with all fidelity and painful travail to reduce the whole course of this office into such order as the same might be safe, sure, and bountifully provided, and performed with an easy and convenient charge, so that Her Majesty thereby should not be discouraged to maintain so necessary a defence for her royal state and country, . . . It pleased your Lordship about five years past to take consideration for the reforming of the ordinary which by your lordships' singular judgement at the second hearing was with great facility set in order, . . . In the passing of these great things the adversaries of the work have continually opposed themselves against me and the service so far as they durst be seen in it, so that among a number of trifling crossings and slanders, the very walls of the realm have been brought in question, and their slander hath gone very far and general, to the encouragement of the enemies of God and our country, only to be avenged of me and this service, which doth discover the corruption and ignorance of the time past. Considering, my very good lord, what a forward and untoward company I have been matched with (even as a sheep among wolves) the business which I have brought about hath been doubled in tediousness, and very cumbersome for me to accomplish . . . I have been bold to be a little tedious to your lordship, for although some of my adversaries have given out that your lordship had an ill opinion of me I have always seen the singular understanding wherewith God hath indued your lordship, with your continual integrity of life and your dexterity in justice, so that I was always glad and ever desirous to come before such a judge."

It will be seen from the above letter that the findings of the commission had not stopped the tongues of the

scandalmongers from wagging. A new witness now came forward, who brought specific charges of gross dishonesty against Hawkins.

This was William Borough, the Clerk to the Ships. This officer received his appointment in 1580, and therefore was not implicated in the scandals that took place previously. Borough made his statement to Burghley in the form of "a dutiful declaration," in which he did not mince matters. To begin with, he said that the Queen had made a bad bargain when she placed so much power in the hands of one man. He suggested, or rather declared, that it was open to grave suspicions that, although the salary paid to Hawkins was £300 a year, yet he was known to live in a style far above this sum, spending at least £800 a year on the upkeep of his house alone.

Another complaint was that the Treasurer had, upon his own and Peter Pett's responsibility, and without the assent of the other members of the Board, entirely changed the design of the new ships. He complained particularly that the high superstructures which had from time immemorial been considered to be a necessary feature of a fighting ship had been abolished, so that the new men-of-war had more the appearance of merchantmen, or in other words "must be accounted a transforming them to galleasses."

This last was indeed true, and was one of the chief advances made in ship design, brought about by Hawkins, and one which was to prove itself only a few years later.

To sum all up, Borough held that the great mistake was in allowing one man alone to decide questions of national importance, which ought to be left to the judgment of the whole Board.

Why Borough allowed himself to be used as a weapon against Hawkins by the rest of the Board, it is difficult

to understand, since he and Hawkins were, and continued afterwards to be, the best of friends.

William Borough seems to have been an honest but rather stupid man, and quite unable to adjust himself to the change in times and manners. Only two years later he again failed to adapt himself to what he considered the unorthodox, and on that occasion his stupidity got him into serious trouble with Francis Drake, a ruthless opportunist who never brooked argument nor opposition.

This occurred in 1587 when Drake was in command of the English fleet which attacked the Spanish Armada preparing in Cadiz harbour. Drake, without previously calling a Council of War as was the custom, simply gave orders for the fleet to enter the harbour and attack the Spanish galleons which were anchored just inside. Borough, who was Vice-Admiral, considered the risk too great, and was offended that his opinion was not invited, and so took his ship the "Golden Lion" out of gun-shot range of the forts, and lay there until Drake returned from his very successful exploit amongst the crowded Spanish shipping. On top of this piece of rank insubordination Borough, indignant and angry, expostulated with Drake over his unorthodox conduct. The Admiral's only reply to this was to place his Vice-Admiral under arrest, and send him back to England to be tried for mutiny.

But to return to the intrigues of the Navy Board.

Both Winter and Borough continued to write secret and slanderous letters to Burghley about the Treasurer. In one of these, a long one from Winter, written in April, 1585, he made many serious reflections on Hawkins' good faith, and complained that he, Hawkins, "had charmed the Queen . . . for he careth not to whom he speaketh, nor what he saith ; blush he will not." Most of Winter's accusations were merely the result of

jealousy, but one charge he brought appeared to be founded on fact. After reminding Burghley that, in his hearing, Hawkins had sworn that there were now no rotten timbers in the "Hope," he declared that "he and others were at Deptford yesterday to confer with Hawkins about the chain at Upnor, which chain, I think, will be costly and useless. Whilst waiting for him I went aboard the 'Hope,' and found much rotten dust, and made a carpenter pull off the covering he had put over the bad place; and there were three timbers rotten, which were seen by Mr. Borough and others as well. I do this, not of malice, but in discharge of my duty to the Queen. I am tired of these quarrels, yet but for me Her Majesty would have had few ships fit for service at this day. Written from East Smithfield, being not very well, the 8th day of April 1585. Your honourable lordship's to command, W. Wynter."

If the above was not written in malice, the writer must certainly have been feeling "not very well" when he took up his pen to indite such charges, because, as Mr. Williamson shrewdly observes, although "Hawkins was undoubtedly caught over the 'Hope's' timbers, yet three rotten timbers do not constitute a rotten fleet."

This affair of the three crumbling timbers is almost the sole concrete fact brought forward by any of the accusers, who for the most part relied on slanderous generalities for their attacks on Hawkins.

Let us see what had actually been done in the way of "new building" and repairing ships since Hawkins' advent to the Navy Board. On the back of a letter written to Burghley, April 8th, 1585, the same day, be it noted, that Winter wrote his letter to the Secretary, is the following account of the "extraordinary reparations since anno 1579: extraordinary services in dry dock."

Here were facts which Burghley or any one else

could verify, and which proved that Hawkins had kept his promise to save the nation's money and at the same time provide a Navy both efficient and prepared for war. Here is the list of expenses as it appears, giving the exact details of cost of building, "new-building," or repairing certain Royal ships :

The Bear finished with riders, &c.	.	.	£240
The Mary Rose new built	.	.	660
The Bonaventure new built and sheathed	.	.	1200
The Foresight new built	.	.	600
The Galley Ellynor new made and sheathed	.	.	600
The Golden Lion new built	.	.	1340
The Jenneth and the George repaired	:	.	150
Boats, pinnaces, cocks, and lighters, new	.	.	480
The Nonpareil new built	.	.	1600
Other extraordinary repairs "as in the books are allowed"	.	.	1600
			<hr/>
Total	.	.	£8470
Annual average, for $5\frac{1}{2}$ years	.	.	£1540



## CHAPTER IX

### HAWKINS IS JUSTIFIED



HE constant strain and anxiety of his public and private life began to tell on the health of Hawkins. In January, 1586, he was suffering from daily attacks of ague or malaria. Through his hands passed vast sums of public money, and at the same time he had to watch over the many ramifications of his own rapidly growing mercantile transactions. Needless to say his enemies, jealous of his success, spread constant rumours that his wealth was ill-gotten. These libels Hawkins treated with the contempt they deserved, although once, when writing to Lord Burghley, he ends his letter on the following bitter note : " For mine own part I have lived in a very mean estate since I came to be an officer (Treasurer), neither have I vainly or superfluously consumed Her Majesty's treasure, or mine own substance, but ever have diligently and carefully occupied to prepare for the danger to come, and whatsoever hath been or is maliciously spoken of me, I doubt not but your Lordship's wisdome is such that ye may discern and judge of my fidelity, of which Her Matie and your Lordships have had long trial and hereafter I will speak little in mine own behalf."

During these years, while he was working to reorganize the Royal Navy, the Treasurer kept the Council well informed of what he was doing and what was going on, by reports and by frequent private letters. Evidently

he enjoyed the full confidence and friendship of Lord Burghley and he wrote to him with considerable freedom, saying much that was obviously meant to go no further than the Minister's private ear. In one such letter, written at Deptford in July, 1584, he harps on the one subject which was always uppermost in his mind, the means whereby the Queen can "strongly annoy and offend the King of Spain, the mortal enemy of our religion and the present government of our realm of England." Hawkins, like many another patriotic Englishman of his day, could think of little else but the threatening danger from Spain. "When I consider," he writes further in the same letter, "whereunto we are born, not for ourselves but for the defence of the Church of God, our prince, and our Country." He was full of confidence as to the ultimate issue and points out, "I do nothing at all doubt of our ability in wealth, for that I am persuaded that the substance of this realm is trebled in value since her Majesties reign. God be glorified for it!" England had indeed risen from poverty to riches within the last few years, wealth made up largely from plunder captured by Elizabethan seamen from Spanish galleons. Enclosed with this letter is a long and minute plan suggesting the best means to "annoy the King of Spain without charge to her Majesty, which shall also bring great profit to her Highness and subjects."

Elizabeth and her ministers were always willing to lend a sympathetic ear to suggestions of this kind, which cost nothing and yet held a hope of bringing in much needed gold, without involving the official patronage of the Government. This enclosure is too long to print here in full but its chief points are these :

John Hawkins proposed that the King of Portugal, as he always styled the pretender, Don Antonio, should declare war on the King of Spain, and so become the



my duty in humble maner to answer unto your good  
 Lige, I do send herewith the bookes which I have  
 commanied me to make, the substance whereof  
 Lige may briefly see in the latter and the former  
 for the payment of the charges expensively, and  
 for the Gold ready for the same amount as all the  
 company, or else for the same amount for the  
 Brang or tare, so as to mounte. And I will by  
 first number

I do also send you Lige a note to shew you fit-  
 and comodous it will be to payement for the  
 wages, it no doubt will greatly helpe to  
 and bring forth the service, and not bring at all inconveni-  
 tione. I speake may in honest and sufficient  
 proportion of it.

I have receaved two letters for as yet to be read  
 first, is a letter from attell from vnder you for me to thimself  
 to be read by Lige, and the other is a letter  
 from lord, the 28th Decr, 1585.

your Honorable ff  
 ever moste haudien



*John Hawkins.*

nominal head of the whole offensive. After this the King of Portugal should grant letters of marque to foreign sea captains to "annoy the King of Spain, upon their own charge," and out of their booty pay unto the King of Portugal five or ten of the hundred."

These privateers were to be allowed to bring their captures into "some part of the West Countrye," where her Majesty would grant them "leave and allowance to retire, victual and sell." As a West-countryman himself the writer felt certain that "The Gentlemen and owners in the west parts will enter deeply in this" as also no doubt would the Flushingers, and the French Protestants, while it was probable that the Portuguese in the Canaries, Brazil and Guinea would rise in revolt in favour of Don Antonio.

Amongst other advantages foreseen by Hawkins was that "our own people, as gunners (whereof we have few) would be made expert, and grow in number, and idle men would grow to be good men of war both by land and sea." A shrewd foresight of what was to follow. The wily Hawkins proposed that, by making the hostilities nominally under the leadership of the claimant to the throne of Portugal, they would thus prevent Spain from declaring war on England; since "this party not only consists of Englishmen, but rather of the French, Flemings, Scotts and such like."

In many of Hawkins' letters to Burghley, we now begin to observe references of a religious kind, and he has many bitter things to say about papists, and is for ever calling upon God to succour good Christians. He ends one long letter to Sir Francis Walsingham, written on board the "Bonaventure" on the 1st of February, 1587, which is full of details for annoying the King of Spain, by remarking: "In open and lawfull warrs God will help us, for we defend the chief cause, our religion, God's own cause, for if we would leave our profession

and turn to serve Baal (as yet forbid, and rather die a thousand deaths) we might have peace but not with God."

This Puritanical side of Hawkins increased with time, and on one occasion, after his return from an unsuccessful voyage, drew from Elizabeth the famous outburst, " You went forth a soldier and came home a divine."

Never in the whole history of her Navy has England had a more industrious administrator than John Hawkins. He combined a broad outlook with imagination and foresight, and yet he had a head for detail which was amazing. In his accounts and estimates are to be found details of cost down to the smallest item. There exists a report dated December 28th, 1585, already referred to, in which he gives at length his proposals for increasing the wages of both officers and sailors in the Navy, and proving that a much better type of man could be induced to volunteer his services, and thus provide smaller but more efficient crews in place of the bigger but poorly paid crews, largely made up of pressed men. Hawkins' reasoning was so unanswerable that in 1586 the sailors had their pay raised to 10s. a month. When Henry VIII came to the throne the sailors' wages were 5s. a month, although he increased this to 6s. 8d. before the end of his reign.

Towards the close of 1587 Hawkins felt that his herculean task was almost concluded. The Royal Navy was now prepared. Its officers, both administrative and combatant, were reliable and thoroughly trained ; the ships in good order and repair ; the crews the best in the world. In November the same year he wrote to Burghley asking to be relieved of his treasurership, and desiring that he might be given command of the Western Squadron at Plymouth to meet the enemy " in the danger to come." No sooner was it known that the Treasurer

wished to resign his office, than his enemies began again to spread rumours accusing him of having made a fortune during his term of office.

The most serious of these accusations was written by Thomas Allen, the Queen's merchant for Naval stores. The document is headed "Articles wherein may appear Her Majesty to be abused, and Mr. Hawkins greatly enriched." He brings eight specific charges of dishonesty against the Treasurer. First he says that Hawkins wishes to resign his treasurership so as to get out with his profits, "before the bad state of her ships is discovered which will call for great expenditure to put right." He accuses him of dishonesty in his own private shipbuilding yards, using the Queen's stores for his own purposes. A second such letter, thought also to be by Thomas Allen, reached Burghley, full of accusations against the resigning Treasurer, but that the writer was not wholly disinterested is suspected by his suggesting at the end that he himself should be appointed to supply the Navy with stores.

One of the last indictments of Hawkins is entitled "Articles exhibited against Mr. John Hawkins 1587," and is identified as coming from some servant of the Earl of Leicester. This proves to be merely a mass of tittle-tattle picked up in the dockyards from clerks, store-keepers, and shipwrights, and there is nothing in it which could possibly shake the confidence of Burghley in his honest protégé.

On December 9th, 1587, the Navy Board presented their report on the work performed by Hawkins for the maintenance of the Navy since 1585. They had nothing but praise for the way the work had been done, and went so far as to add that he had "expended a far greater sum in carpentry upon Her Majesty's Ships than he hath had any allowance for"; a pretty sound rebuke to the slanderers, and corroborating the oft-repeated statement

of John Hawkins himself that he was vastly out of pocket over his post of Treasurer to the Navy.

Let us consider for a moment the forces that were at work on the Continent, for they had much bearing on the political and national life of England. Since 1570 strife was ever taking place, or threatening, in the Netherlands, France, Scotland or Ireland. The Queen's life was never out of danger, and religious differences were constantly present, all the more sinister because beneath the surface. The war in Scotland, between Mary and the supporters of her small son under Murray, had been brought to a successful conclusion. In Ireland, massacres, rebellion and famine brought ruin and despair. The wild clans rose again and again in the desperate but futile hope of winning back their tribal independence, and not, as many ardent English or Spanish Catholics believed or hoped, for the Papacy.

In 1579 Sir James Fitzmaurice, under authority of the Pope, landed with troops at Dingle, to meet with prompt death. A year later a much larger force composed of Spanish and Italian soldiers landed at Smerwick, to be defeated and slaughtered by the Lord Deputy, Lord Grey. This invasion caused great anxiety in England, because the recent successes of Spain in the Netherlands had freed whole armies for other fields of conquest. Yet the spirit of Ireland refused to be quelled, and Earl Desmond, the most powerful chieftain in all Munster, caused his followers to rise and throw off the oppressive yoke of England : only to meet with defeat and death.

Once more famine followed, with a pestilence, which swept away some 30,000 starving peasants.

In France the contest between the Protestants and Catholics continued. The Massacre of St. Bartholomew on August 14th, 1572, put the Catholics in power for a

while, but scattered abroad hundreds of Huguenots who clamoured loudly and persistently for revenge.

Two years later Charles IX died, to be succeeded by his brother Henry of Aragon, between whom and Elizabeth diplomatic sparring had taken place with a view to their marriage, a union which, as far as the Queen of England was concerned, was never meant to eventuate, but was a mere diplomatic device so popular in those days in the political game of chess.

From 1580 until 1584 the power of Spain was on the increase. Ever since the Duke of Parma had been sent to the Netherlands to tackle the situation, the Spanish armies had been victorious, and for several years peace reigned in that racked state, and the conquerors had time and opportunity to prepare for the inevitable struggle with England.

The situation at home was becoming grave. Not only was Spain more powerful, but King Philip had added Portugal and her colonies to his possessions. Elizabeth again played her favourite card which she kept up her sleeve for use in those times of threatened danger. Once again she put out diplomatic feelers towards a matrimonial match with Alençon, now become the Duke of Anjou. With this in view, the Duke was invited to the English Court, only to be despatched to the Netherlands, where he was entertained with the hope of being declared King. In 1584 he suddenly became ill and died; it was suspected, of poison.

Events of grave import followed quickly on each other. In 1583, Parsons, one of the leaders of the Jesuit party, escaped from England after the death of Campion, and joined himself with Philip of Spain and the Duke of Guise, to bring about the assassination of Elizabeth. The Queen was to be killed, the Catholics of England were to rise, and the Duke of Guise would immediately invade England with an army which would join forces

with young James of Scotland. But Philip of Spain, ever dilatory and hesitating, refused to be hurried, and before he had made up his mind news of the plot was dragged out of Throgmorton on the rack. Young James was seized by the Protestant lords, and Lennox driven from the country. The veil was now torn aside, and every Catholic in the country became suspect. Mendoza, the Spanish Ambassador, was at once dismissed and sent home. In the same year the ill-fated Prince of Orange was assassinated by the fanatic priest, Balthazar Gerard.

One result, unlooked for by the arch-plotter of all this scheming to bring about the death of Elizabeth, was that the English people became united, both Protestants and Catholics, as they never had before. In 1585 the Association Bond was formed to defend the person of the Sovereign, while all Jesuits and seminary priests were forthwith banished from the country. On the Continent the pendulum of power still swung against England. After the death of Alençon in 1584, the Huguenot Prince, Henry of Navarre, came to the French throne, and then yet another conspiracy to murder Elizabeth was formed but frustrated.

The prime mover in this was Anthony Babington, an ardent Catholic, who had been one of the pages to Mary Queen of Scots. Later he had come to London, where he made many friends of his own creed at Court, and formed a secret society for the protection of Jesuits in England. He then travelled on the Continent, where he met many of the agents of Mary Stuart, one of the chief being John Ballard, a Roman Catholic priest. The Pope had given his sanction for a plot to be organized to assassinate the English Queen, and Ballard found in Babington a ready tool for this enterprise. In 1586 Babington was back in London, deeply involved in the conspiracy which, if successful, was to lead to the death of Elizabeth and the placing of the Queen of Scots on

the throne. However, Walsingham's spies got wind of the plot, and soon discovered who were the chief conspirators. Babington was executed, with Ballard and others who did not manage to escape from the country. Mary Stuart, being found to be deeply involved in the plot, was put on her trial, condemned to death, and in February, 1587, beheaded at Fotheringay Castle.



## CHAPTER X

### THE LAST STRAW



FTER a dozen years and more of diplomatic move and countermove between the rulers of England and Spain, King Philip played what seems at first sight to have been a false card. To us to-day it appears to be an act of stark madness, yet it was probably done deliberately to bring

matters to a head.

In the previous year the crops of Spain had been a failure so complete that the country was threatened with starvation. Gold from the American settlements there was in plenty, but corn was lacking. To meet this crisis, the Spanish Government invited foreign nations to import their surplus stocks. England, one of the chief wheat-growing countries of Europe, responded by sending ships, deeply laden with grain, to the various Spanish ports. Then suddenly, without hint or warning, the blow fell. The port authorities seized the ships and their cargoes, and imprisoned the English Captains and crews.

Only one ship escaped ; this was the "Primrose," of London, which was lying off the town of Bilbao when the unexpected blow fell.

Hakluyt considered the epic worthy of inclusion in his collection of English Voyages, and states his reasons for so doing in the following preface :

“ It is not unknown to the world what danger our English ships have lately escaped, how sharply they have been intreated, and how hardly they have been assaulted : so that the valiance of those that managed them is worthy remembrance. And therefore in respect of the courageous attempt and valiant enterprise of the ship called the Primrose of London, which hath obtained renown, I have taken in hand to publish the truth thereof, to the intent that it may be generally known to the rest of the English ships, that by the good example of this the rest may in time of extremity adventure to do the like, to the honour of the Realm and the perpetual remembrance of themselves.”

It was on a Wednesday, the 26th day of May, in the year 1585, that the “ Primrose,” a tall ship of 150 tons, with a crew of twenty-eight, lay at anchor outside the Bay of Bilbao. She had brought a cargo of corn, and two of the crew were on shore making arrangements for this to be landed.

Presently there rowed alongside a pinnace with seven Spaniards who brought a load of fresh cherries to sell. These asked if they might come aboard and were made welcome by Captain Foster, who “ made them the best cheer that he could with beer, beef and biscuit, wherein the ship was well furnished.”

Presently four of the visitors left the banquet and rowed ashore, leaving their three friends to enjoy the honest British cheer. But soon the Captain began to be a little suspicious and “ misdoubting some danger, secretly gave speech that he was doubtful of these men what their intent was,” although he was careful not to allow them to guess his suspicions. In a little while, Master Foster became really alarmed when a large ship-boat pulled alongside with some seventy Spaniards in her, followed by the pinnace in which were now crowded

twenty-four men. Up the side without asking leave, came four men, headed by the Corrigidor or governor of the town ; and a moment later the rest of the Spaniards, armed with rapiers, and to the beating of a drum, came swarming in, over the ship's side. In a moment they were all over the ship, some even entering the cabins while others went down into the hold.

At the same time the Corrigidor, accompanied by his chief officer bearing his white staff of office, called upon the English Captain to surrender in the name of the King of Spain, “ whereat the Master said to his men, ‘ we are betrayed ! ’ ” In an instant several daggers were held over his heart, “ whereat the Master was amazed, and his men greatly discomfited, to see themselves ready to be conveyed even to the slaughter.” So staggered were the English that for a few moments they were in doubt what to do, when suddenly raising a shout, they “ in a very bold and manly sort ” seized what arms they had at hand, as javelins, lances and boar-spears, and attacked the invaders, at the same time firing off five calivers which were ready loaded with small shot. These guns were under the hatches, and to the consternation of the Spaniards were suddenly fired off at them from below, and played the very devil amongst them. The tables were now turned on the Spaniards, who begged the Captain to call off his sailors ; but Master Foster, already risen to the occasion, “ answered that such was the courage of the English Nation in defence of their own lives, that they would slay them and him also, and therefore it lay not in him to do it.”

The Spanish plot had indeed turned out a fiasco, for already the “ blood did run about the ship in great quantity, some of them being shot between the legs, the bullets issuing forth at their breasts, some cut in the head, some thrust into the body, and many of them sore wounded.”

The rout was complete, and while some scrambled into the boats to escape, others, still clutching their swords, leaped overboard into the sea rather than remain to face the savage English sailors. All the boats having beaten a hasty retreat to the shore, a number of Spaniards were left swimming about round the ship, and four of these begged piteously to be saved, and were hauled on board.

When they were on deck, further proof of their treachery was found, for on being attended by the ship's surgeon for their wounds, it was discovered that "all the Spaniards' bosoms were stuft with paper, to defend them from the shot." But a greater surprise was to come, for it turned out that one of the bedraggled prisoners was none other than the Corrigidor himself, who was governor of a hundred towns, and getting from his office more than £600 a year.

No time now to stop to gloat over this unexpected prize, for every moment was precious if the ship was to escape. John Burrell and John Broadbank, the two men who were ashore, had to be left to the none too tender mercies of the Spaniards, and sails were hoisted and away went the gallant little "Primrose" for England.

As soon as danger was over Captain Foster turned to the Corrigidor and demanded to know why he had made such a traitorous attack on his ship. He replied by calling for his hose, which had been sent to dry by the galley fire, and produced from them the King's Commission.

This Commission throws such a light on the policy of the King of Spain that it will be well to give its contents at some length :

It is addressed to "The Licentiat de Escobar, my Corrigidor of my Signorie of Biskay," and goes on to state, "I have caused a great fleet to be put in readiness in the haven of Lisbon, and the river of Sevile. There

is required for the soldiers, armour, victuals, and munition, . . . I do therefore require you, that presently (immediately) upon the arrival of this carrier, and with as much dissimulation as may be, you take order from the staying and arresting with great foresight, of all the shipping that may be found on the coast, . . . saving those of France."

The Corrigidor was to seize all armour, munitions, tackles, sails and victuals, and to see that no ships or men escaped.

Eventually the "Primrose" got safely back to London on June 8th, with the prisoners, being the only ship to escape this blatant act of Spanish treachery.

The immediate result of this breach of good faith was that the whole nation was roused to anger. From one end of England to the other the cry went up for instant revenge.

To deal with this situation, Hawkins and Drake had already laid before the Government a simple but bold plan.

This was no other than to attack Spain at the source of her riches, America. The great fleets which were building were paid for with the gold that poured in a steady stream from Mexico and Peru. If this stream could be stemmed, even for a while, the Spanish King would be compelled to postpone his preparations.

To Drake, quite naturally, fell the command, for if ever there was an adventure exactly fitting his genius it was this one.

By great good fortune a suitable fleet was ready at hand, one which had been fitted out by Drake for a raid on the Spice Islands, under the patronage of Elizabeth, and in which she had taken a financial interest. Besides the Queen, who was the largest adventurer, the Earl of Leicester, Francis Drake, William and John Hawkins and Sir Walter Raleigh, were shareholders.

On September 14th, 1585, Drake weighed and sailed from Plymouth Sound directly to Vigo. Arrived there, the English Admiral went ashore and held polite conversation with the Governor, the Marquis of Zerralbo.

During the stay of the fleet, a Spanish ship arrived off the port, containing a rich cargo, which included a valuable set of church plate. This prize fell to Drake, who, although now an English Admiral, had not outlived his earlier buccaneering instincts. What the Marquis thought of this high-handed conduct on the part of his visitor, Drake did not stop to inquire, but sailed away to the Canary Isles ; and thence to the Cape Verde Islands, where heavy ransoms were extracted from the terrified inhabitants to save their towns from plunder and fire. Time was not wasted, for it was vital to the scheme to reach America before warning of the approaching danger should come. Arriving at San Domingo, 1200 soldiers were put ashore under the command of Christopher Carleill, and the city was captured. Next Cartagena was attacked, but the amount of spoil taken was disappointing, because warning had been received of the English being in the neighbourhood, and the bullion and treasure had been hurried into the interior and hidden. The last part of the plan, which was to land troops at Nombre de Dios and march across the Isthmus and sack the city of Panama, had to be abandoned owing to a severe outbreak of yellow fever amongst the crews. So virulent was this that as many as 570 men died, and when to these were added the men killed in the fighting, it was discovered that the whole force was reduced to less than half its original strength.

Instead of returning straight home to England, Drake chose the route usually taken by the Spanish galleons, and sailed northwards through the Florida channel, stop-

ping only to destroy the Spanish post at St. Augustine in Florida.

Thence he sailed with his fleet to Virginia, and took on board the starving English settlers, from Raleigh's colony.

It was late in the summer of 1586 that Drake returned to England. The expedition, from a purely financial aspect, had not been a success, but as a blow to Spain, both financially and politically, it had succeeded beyond all expectations.

The immediate effect on King Philip was to hold up his Armada for at least another year, and at the same time to prove beyond any doubt that the vulnerable spot in the great Spanish Empire was her American Colonies.

Not the least valuable part of the plunder brought home by Drake were 240 cannons taken out of Spanish forts and ships. Guns for the new English warships were in great request, and thus Drake found a ready means to supply this want. Two years later these same guns were to be used with telling effect on the Spaniards themselves.

About the time of Drake's return, Hawkins got permission to carry out himself one of his own pet schemes. This was to take a squadron to patrol the coast of Spain, in order to blockade the chief Spanish ports and dock-yards, and at the same time watch between Spain and the Azores, for any home-bound East or West Indian treasure ships.

It was in August that Hawkins got away, but he found himself much hampered in his movements by the usual eleventh-hour orders, which restricted his scope of activity.

But little is known about this expedition since the usual and most valuable source of information, Hakluyt, is strangely silent. It is more than likely that the

account of the affair was edited by Hawkins himself, or by some important member of the Government, for fear that the full story might lead to difficulties with Spain.

The ships which formed Hawkins' fleet were the "Nonpareil," a Queen's ship of 500 tons, the "Golden Lion," 500, the "Hope," 600, the "Revenge," 500, and the small "Tremontana," 150, with the usual accompaniment of pinnaces and armed merchantmen, making, in all, about eighteen vessels.

Alas, just as the fleet was about to sail for Spain, the Government became alarmed by rumours of an intended raid on the English coast by the Guise party from Normandy, and ordered Hawkins "to ply up and down" the Channel.

This false alarm wasted three precious weeks, so that by the time Hawkins reached the Spanish coast, in the latter part of September, he found he was too late, for the valuable East India fleet had just before slipped into port.

Practically anything that we know about this expedition we owe to foreign sources, and these are few and meagre, for the strictest measures were in force in all the English ports, to prevent leakage of any information as to the movements of ships or troops. So strict were these that Mendoza, the Spanish Ambassador, reported to his Government "that it was almost impossible to get information from English ports, for even neutrals frequenting them thought it wise to keep their mouths shut. As for the possibility of sending spies to reconnoitre, it was out of the question, for the arrival of a fly, much more of a man not belonging to the neighbourhood, was instantly noticed, and the individual seized and questioned."

All travellers had to carry permits from the Justices of their last place of residence, and even in London the

hosts reported strange lodgers without delay, which, as Mr. J. A. Williamson observes, is all strangely reminiscent of the rules and regulations in force in England from 1914 to 1918, to protect the State from the activities of enemy spies.

In spite of all these precautions the news reached Spain of Hawkins' expedition, and it is mostly from Spanish sources that we know anything at all about it. Amongst other interesting facts to be found in the Spanish Calendar, 1580-6, are the statements of certain Spanish prisoners, who gave evidence after their release from the English Admiral. Among them was the master of a ship captured by the "Nonpareil" on September 30th, some miles off the mouth of the Tagus.

When the Spanish Captain was brought before Hawkins, he was surprised by the kindness of his reception, for he was allowed to keep all his personal belongings, and after the usual questioning the English Admiral himself showed his guest over his flagship. The Spanish Captain was much impressed by what he saw, the 44 polished bronze guns, and the smart crew of 300 English seamen. He reported that all the four great galleons were well found ; the hulls clean and sails new. What particularly struck him was the way in which the crews were fed, for, over and above the ordinary fare of a sailor, he found supplied both fresh apples and pears, and each ship carried live pigs and sheep. Without any doubt these extras were furnished at the expense of Hawkins, and this is one of the many examples we have, not only of his kindness to his men, but of his shrewdness, far ahead of his time, in discovering means to keep his crews healthy and happy. Although Hawkins had been a slave dealer, he had never been a slave driver.

Hawkins returned to Plymouth at the end of October,

and although, as had been the case with Drake's previous voyage, the results were disappointing from the point of view of the adventurers who advanced the money, the object was attained of further postponing the coming of the Armada, now looked upon as inevitable. Indeed, war with Spain was to be desired, as being the only way out of the impossible situation which had arisen between the two nations, and Hawkins' cruise had given the English Admiralty further time to complete their fleets for defence.

This expedition would, in all probability, have met with great success, if only Hawkins had been left to his own devices, instead of being ordered at the moment of his setting out to cruise in the English Channel. It is quite possible, too, that his health hampered him, for he was suffering very severely this year from his old enemy, the ague.

It must have been an experience of great interest and value to the Admiral to make this cruise with the ships, armaments and crews all brought to perfection on the lines he himself had for years advised and planned. The salary which Hawkins received while acting as Admiral in command was thirty shillings a day—which compares very favourably with the revised pay of the ordinary seaman of ten shillings a month.

The policy so long urged by John Hawkins of harrying the Spaniards at home and abroad had so far justified itself as to cause a further expedition to be despatched under Drake in the following April.

Hawkins' own plan he disclosed in a letter written to Walsingham on board the "Bonaventure" dated 1st February, 1587.

After stating his belief that war with Spain is inevitable, although "we are desirous to have peace, as it becometh good Christians," he says that it is no use "mammering" or hesitating any longer, as delay only

means "our Commonwealth doth utterly decay." He points out how all trade is stagnant, how unemployment and poverty are on the increase, how the country's mercantile shipping is suffering and the sea trade going to "the French and Scots" who "eat us up, and grow in wealth and freights." The time has come, he continues, for England "to choose either a dishonourable and uncertain peace," or "a determined and resolute war."

He is strongly against making any alliance with foreign powers, "for that breedeth great charge and no profit at all." He was a firm believer in the policy of Splendid Isolation. He then goes into the details of his plan for maintaining a squadron of powerful warships continually cruising between Spain and the Azores, so that any East or West India treasure ship would have to run the English blockade before reaching a home port.

He ends this letter : " therefore I conclude with God's blessing and a lawful open war, the Lord shall bring us a most honourable and quiet peace, to the glory of his church and to the honour of her Majesty and this realm of England ; which God for His mercy's sake grant."

In spite of all these devices for delaying the inevitable invasion, war was daily drawing nearer. In the whole history of the world there has been no greater example of the rulers of two hostile states endeavouring so long, so patiently, and so skilfully to evade a final issue. But all the political wiles and stratagems of Philip and Elizabeth were exhausted. Both nations, the Spanish and the English, were eager to be at each other's throats. It was to be a Holy War, Spain, prompted by the Pope of Rome, on the one side ; England, the heretic upstart, on the other.

And still the patient Philip continued to build more

huge ships which with difficulty and vast expense were equipped and manned.

Yet one further raid was undertaken to delay the completion of the now openly talked of Invincible Armada for one more precious year, which would give Hawkins the opportunity to put the finishing touches to his ships, and make his final preparations.

This was the famous "Singeing of the King of Spain's beard" when, in April, 1587, Francis Drake sailed out from Plymouth in command of a fleet of thirty ships, including four belonging to the Royal Navy, the "Bona-venture," "Lion," "Dreadnought" and "Rainbow."

Sailing directly to Cadiz, where Don Alvaro de Bazan, "Admiral of the Ocean Sea," had his headquarters, he surprised a vast Spanish fleet of large but unmanned ships-of-war which the English sailors attacked, plundered and burnt in full sight of the powerless Spaniards.

After playing havoc at Cadiz, the English sailed leisurely down the coast, stopping to land and plunder at their own sweet will, as far as the mouth of the Tagus, where the fleet anchored, and Drake sent to Lisbon a defiant challenge to the Marquis of Santa Cruz, to come out and fight in the open. The "Iron Marquis," though only too eager to accept, was forced to swallow the insult since, without crews to man his fleet, he was impotent.

After this thoroughly "Drakian" gesture the English Admiral stretched to the Azores, there to await the returning East India carracks.

Before long the "St. Philip," heavily armed, but with a cargo of enormous value, fell into his hands and was brought back to England together with the plunder taken at Cadiz and other Spanish and Portuguese ports; all "to their own profit and due commendation, and the great admiration of the whole kingdom."

For this brilliant piece of work Drake received an

official reprimand from his Sovereign, who still feared that the patience of the long-suffering Philip might be over-strained ; but, official reprimands or no, Drake had yet further cemented his position as the idol of the people, and no doubt received a very satisfactory share of the plunder. This was the first East India prize ever brought to England ; and the richness of the cargo did much to turn the eyes of English merchants and adventurers towards the East, and to inflame their imaginations towards the Far East as a centre for trade and possible settlement.

As the definite danger to England grew larger and more obvious to the common people, so did they unite and their religious and political differences melt away ; and by the opening of the fateful year of 1588 the Queen found herself at the head of a warlike nation, ready to fight to the last for their Queen and Country. In the case of the English Catholics, all but the most fervid decided, when the time came to choose between foreign Pope and English Queen, to side with the latter, and Catholic and Puritan were eager to stand shoulder to shoulder in defence of England, either at sea or on shore.

At last Hawkins was able to look at the results of his labours of the last twenty years. What did he see but an answer to his traducers and accusers ? Here was the lie cast back into their teeth. He himself had known all along that the fleet would be ready when the time came. What did others think and say ?

Sir William Winter wrote : “ Our ships doth show themselves like gallants here. I assure you it will do a man’s heart good to behold them ; and would to God the Prince of Parma were upon the seas with all his forces, and we in view of them.” Than which no higher praise could come from the once jealous enemy of John Hawkins. Another letter, written by Howard to

Burghley on February 21st, runs as follows, and states in no uncertain terms what the Lord Admiral himself thought : " I have been aboard of every ship that goeth out with me, and in every place where any may creep, and I do thank God that they be in the estate they be in ; and there is never a one of them that knows what a leak means. I have known when an Admiral of England hath gone out, and two ships in the fleet could not say so. . . . And therefore I do presume greatly that those that have been made in Her Majestie's time be very good and serviceable and shall prove them arrant liars that have reported the contrary." Other testimonials were not wanting.

Lord Howard, writing to Burghley on the 29th of February, stated : " I protest before God, and as my soul shall answer for it, that I think there were never in any place of the world worthier ships than these are, for so many. And as few as we are, if the King of Spain's forces be not hundreds, we will make good sport with them."

On March 9th Howard again wrote to Burghley, giving an account of a personal experience in one of the Royal ships for which Hawkins was entirely responsible:

" The ' Elizabeth Bonaventure,' in coming in, by the fault of the pilot came aground on a sound. . . . The next tide, by the goodness of God and great labour, was brought off, and in all this time there never came a spoonful of water into her well. My Lord, except a ship had been made of iron, it were to be thought impossible to do as she hath done. . . . And this is one of the ships which they would have come into dry-dock, now before she came out. My Lord, I have no doubt, but some ships which have been ill reported of will deceive them as this ship doth. . . . Well, My Lord, they will be found good ships when they come to the sea."

It is permissible while on this subject to quote at some length from a letter written by Hawkins on March 3rd, 1587, to Burghley, since it not only describes the point of view of Hawkins, but also shows how well and clearly he wrote. This letter begins :

“ My bounden duty humbly remembered unto your good lordship, I have been very ill since I was with your lordship, but am now better, I thank God. I do daily hear good report of the good estate of the ships abroad, as it may appear to your lordship by the letters I send herewith enclosed ; So do I hear many a good judgement that have served now in them report, wondering how these lewd bruits could have been cast abroad, and the ships in that efficient and strong estate. But not to be troublesome to your lordship, when the shipwrights saw I took a course to put the navy in such order as there should be no great cause to use any extraordinary reparations upon them, then they saw the multitude of their idle followers should lack their maintenance, and so began to bruit out weakness in the state of the ships ; but they knew not where ; and then every man tare up that which was sufficient, and said thus : ‘ We will weary Hawkins of his bargain.’ And as this shall be a thing most manifest to your lordship and the whole world, that the navy is in good and strong estate, contrary to their hypercritical practice and vile reports, so your lordship shall find the rest of their informations much like unto this.”

So much for his accusers and slanderers ; but they were of little account compared to the troubles the Treasurer had in finding sufficient equipment for his ships—“ I would to God Her Majesty were so well provided of all furniture that belongeth to the ships, which indeed is the least matter I fear. But the pro-

visions that come from foreign countries, and such as require long time to provide, do most trouble me—as great cables, anchors, cordage, canvas, great masts, and such like ; waste and spoil of boats and pinnaces by this winter weather, as Sir William Winter doth well note."

After explaining how he means to deal with this shortage of materials he goes on : " There hath been great service abroad these two years past and the ships mightily supplied from time to time and with many provisions, and we cull daily in such sort as I am both afraid and sorry to present it to your lordship. Howbeit, it must be done, and care had to do it in time."

He harps on the unprecedented cost of the upkeep of the Royal Navy, pointing out how " The expenses extraordinary have been great and such as before this time have seldom come into use ; for the navy is great, and men more unruly and more changeable than in time past, so as it doth not only amaze me to answer everything, but I do grieve at the charge as much as it were to proceed from myself. . . . The ships I found in weak estate, and now they are as your lordship doth see ; and this is done in effect upon the sparing out of the ordinary warrant of £5719, yet I am daily backbited and slandered. But your lordship doth know what a place this is to hold that I am in. Many are to receive out of this office and among a multitude there are some bad and unreasonable ; and although I endeavour myself to pay and satisfy all men with order and equity, yet some be displeased.

" Therefore, my good lord, consider in your wisdom the burden I bear. My service to Her Majesty I grudge not, but all my ability and life is ready to be employed in her service. When it shall be your lordship's pleasure I will give mine attendance to inform your lordship substantially what is to be done touching the provisions that

are to be provided for the navy, and the debt that the office doth and will daily grow into. And so, wishing your lordship health and prosperity, I humbly take my leave. From London, the 3rd of March, 1587.

“ Your lordship’s humbly to command,  
“ JOHN HAWKYNs.”

It was this burning question of provisions for the ships’ crews and the sufficient supply of powder and shot which taxed the authorities on whose shoulders the responsibility of supply rested. Although not the business of the Navy Treasurer, yet John Hawkins was much concerned in any matter which affected the fighting ability of his Navy, and on which he foresaw the ultimate issue might well depend.

The trouble was twofold. Firstly, the shortage of money with which these most necessary supplies might be purchased ; secondly, the fact that before the days of cold storage or tinned or preserved food, fleets with large crews to feed could not keep the seas for more than about a month.

If fresh provisions were bought by the Navy contractors, consisting of salt beef, salt codfish, bread and beer, these, if not consumed soon, went bad.

To order them by a certain date when the fleet was expected to sail, meant that, if for some unforeseen reason, as often happened, the departure of the fleet had to be postponed, the whole or greater part of the provisions were wasted, money thrown away, and a further supply not able to be collected for perhaps several weeks.

A great saving in victuals was due to Hawkins’ reform, by which the number of seamen in every ship was reduced, every vessel thus requiring but little more than half the quantity of provisions that used to be needed, when the ships carried much larger crews.

In the case of gunpowder, the ingredients had to be imported from foreign countries, and the facilities for manufacturing it in any quantities were insufficient.

As to the personnel of the Navy, Hawkins had got together the finest sailors afloat, both officers and men. They had served their apprenticeship in a rough but splendid school, aboard armed traders, privateers and pirate ships. They knew the whole art of navigation ; the sailors could reef and furl, were accustomed to sail in all seas, while many of the seamen who manned the Armada had never before sailed outside the Straits of Gibraltar.

Between the ships of the two rival navies there was little comparison. The Spanish ships of war were fine craft of an obsolete pattern. These vessels, which had been the latest and most perfect type nearly a century earlier, were no match for the swifter, more handy and smaller English ships as designed to the plans of Hawkins. The Spaniards had not moved with the times, and had refused to recognize the altered methods of sea-fighting. They still persisted in looking upon a fight at sea as being a conflict between soldiers, in floating fortresses. They still believed in the mediæval manœuvres, when two high clumsy ships, with towering forecastles and poops, met broadside on, and, after locking together with grappling-irons, the trained soldiers fought each other face to face. Hawkins had seen ahead, and recognized that long-range artillery had altered all this. The English ships not only carried many more guns, but they shot further, and were worked by skilfully trained gunners. When the two fleets at last met, the English were able to bombard the enemy at a range which made it impossible for the Spaniards to reply. The English gunners could fire twice as rapidly as the Spanish, an advantage which helped the English to win many other sea-battles in after years.

As was shown later on in the year, although the Spaniards were defeated, they were highly trained and skilful fighters, but their skill was that which was in fashion eighty years earlier, and had helped to make Spain the greatest military and naval power in the world, and won for her the largest and richest Empire the world had ever known.



## CHAPTER XI

### THE INVINCIBLE ARMADA



HIS Epic, probably the greatest in our history, and the event which had the most profound effect on the nation's destiny, has been so often recounted that this is hardly the place to tell that whole story over again.

But to ignore it, in what is an attempt to portray the life of the great Sir John Hawkins, would be impossible. The day on which the Invincible Armada was reported to be in the Channel, the iron test began of Hawkins' whole life's work and ambition. For twenty years and more he had toiled, day and night, month after month, to prepare for "the day," had fought against opposition and long established vested interests of office-holders, and had spent largely of his own fortune to provide for necessary equipment which the Government would not or could not pay for. All this long while, the Treasurer had been a victim of malaria, but nothing could daunt his dogged courage and patient tenacity of purpose.

Let us see what was happening in Spain. The wave of anger which followed the outrage at Cadiz had apparently died down, but in reality the "Singeing of the King's beard" had wounded the pride of Spain more than any outrage committed by "El Draque," "Achines" or any other English corsair. The humiliation had been so complete, that even the humble apology which was sent by Queen Elizabeth, in December, could not wash away

the stain. Queen Elizabeth was in one of her most dangerous moods, and even suggested to her Councillors returning, or rather handing over to Spain, as a peace offering, the towns in Flanders which had been entrusted to her keeping by the Dutch. Luckily there were men in England bold enough to prevent any such disastrous surrender.

In the meanwhile the ever plodding, ever patient King Philip was steadily working to repair the damage done at Cadiz and to replace the lost galleons. So much so, that early in February Alonzo de Bazan, Marquis of Santa Cruz, the Lord High Admiral of Spain, reported his fleets all ready for sea, and urged the departure of the Armada before the end of March, when, as he predicted, the northerly gales would set in and make the intended voyage to England both difficult and dangerous.

Then fell another blow : one which was to dash all hopes of a successful invasion of England. After a few days of illness, the Marquis of Santa Cruz died at Lisbon, at the age of seventy-three, after serving for fifty years in the Royal Navy. Some declared he died of a broken heart at the King's hesitation ; which he may well have done, for the dream of his life had been the invasion and conquest of England, and he had for years studied plans for its successful execution and had even out of his own pocket paid spies to keep him informed of any Naval or Military activities in England and Ireland.

This sudden death of Santa Cruz was a tragedy indeed, since he was Spain's most able seaman ; for, although she had other fine and capable sea officers, his loss would be difficult to replace.

But this in no way daunted King Philip ; indeed, he may have thought he saw in this the finger of God ; for now the Spanish King, the chosen upholder of the true faith, could appoint some commander who would be

more amenable to advice than ever was the old “Iron Marquis,” and one who would be unlikely to take any risks or do any more fighting than was absolutely necessary.

The Invincible Armada lay at anchor awaiting the King’s choice of a new Commander, who should lead them to victory against the formidable Francis Drake and his heretic fleet.

The Royal choice fell upon Don Alonzo Perez de Guzman, el Bueno—the good—Senor de San Lucar de Barrameda, and Duke of Medina Sidonia.

It is probable, amongst the whole of the grandees of Spain, no more unsuitable Commander could have been found. The only possible excuse for his appointment was that he was of very high birth, a qualification considered to be indispensable in a Commander-in-Chief. Yet there were several other naval officers of high birth, who were also efficient.

It is difficult to write of Medina Sidonia without appearing to ridicule him. He had so little, so very little, to justify his high and important office. We read that he was aged thirty-eight, was enormously rich, was fond of a quiet country life, hunting and shooting. He liked riding, but was by no means a good horseman, in spite of his famous bandy legs. He liked to lounge in his orange groves at San Lucar, and was without ambition or vanity, but was good-natured. Of short stature and swarthy complexion, he was often likened to Sancho, the faithful squire of Don Quixote. He suffered from sea-sickness when in a boat, and was liable to catch colds on all and sundry occasions. He was perfectly incapable in any business or in any crisis, and knew it and frankly confessed to the same.

In these days it would be said of the “Golden Duke”—as unkind persons called him in comparison to his predecessor, the “Iron Marquis”—that he suffered from

an inferiority complex. Naval commanders who suffered from this disability had no business crossing swords with English Admirals.

His wife, the Duchess, Doña Ana de Mendoza, who ought to have known her Duke after sixteen years of married life, declared that her good-natured but exceeding stupid husband was well enough amongst people who did know what he really was like, but that once he was employed in business of State, then Spain would discover to her cost his real character.

The whole of Spain was astounded by the King's choice, but in all honesty to Medina Sidonia it must be admitted that no one was more surprised than himself. No one could have been more diffident at receiving a high honour from his Monarch than the Duke, in the letter he wrote to the King's secretary, Idiagnez, on February 16th, 1588.

“ My health is bad,” he pleaded, “ and from my small experience of the water I know that I am always sea-sick. I have no money that I can spare. I owe a million ducats, and I have not a real to spend on my outfit.” Following this unmartial opening, he continued : “ The expedition is on such a scale, and the object is of such high importance that the person at the head of it ought to understand navigation and sea fighting, and I know nothing of either. I have not any of these essential qualifications. I have no acquaintances among the officers who are to serve under me. Santa Cruz had information about the state of things in England ; I have none. Were I competent otherwise I should have to act in the dark by the opinion of others, and I cannot tell whom I may trust. The Adelantado of Castile would do better than I. Our Lord would help him, for he is a good Christian and has fought in naval battles. If you send me, depend upon it I shall have a bad account to render of my trust.”

Never probably did a Duke reply in such abject terms to refuse an honour from his Sovereign; but after reading it we begin to feel that perhaps the embarrassed Duke was, after all, not so great a simpleton as is generally supposed. However, Philip was never one to change his opinions, and continued to insist on the Duke's accepting the command, until at last the reluctant country gentleman gave way and wrote : " Since your Majesty still desires it after my confession of incompetence, I will try to deserve your confidence. As I shall be doing God's work I may hope that He will help me." To this agreeable note Philip replied that the Duke was sacrificing himself in God's service as well as His Majesty's, adding that " If I was less occupied at home I would accompany the fleet myself and I should be certain that all would go well. Take heart : you have now an opportunity of showing the extraordinary qualities which God, the author of all good, has been pleased to bestow upon you. Happen what may, I charge myself with the care of your children. If you fail, you fail ; but the cause being the cause of God, you will not fail."

Thus fortified and reassured, the Duke left his home at San Lucar and repaired at once to Lisbon to take up his important duties, and any lurking doubts that still might have troubled his mind were dispersed by the Prioress of the Annunciata, Maria de la Visitacion, who had in a vision beheld Santiago and two angels smiting Drake and his heretic companions ; to bear out which she exhibited five wounds. Poor lady, when some months afterwards scapegoats were being searched for, this holy woman was tried and punished as an impostor.

Let us see, before returning to Plymouth, what sort of fleet it was that Santa Cruz had left to the tender mercies of Philip and the Golden Duke. Of ships, both great and small, there were 150, navigated by 8000 Spanish and Italian sailors.

For purely fighting duties, the fleet carried 19,000 trained infantrymen, with their officers. These officers with their servants, gentlemen volunteers, priests and surgeons amounted to another 3000, which does not take into account the galley slaves.

The ratio between the number of priests and surgeons is interesting and significant in this holy crusade. Of the former there were one hundred, of the latter to attend their bodies and not their souls, but eighty-five, and this figure includes the surgeons' mates.

Provisions enough to last six months were stored away in the holds, as well as great sums of money and plate. Swords of honour also were taken to present to the Catholic English noblemen who would be the first to welcome the soldiers of the Pope, on their landing. It was even reported, by some English sailors who escaped from the Armada in the Channel, that large numbers of halters were carried in one of the vessels which were to be used to hang the heretics!

No chances were to be taken over the souls of the departing. For three years a stream of prayer had risen from every church in Spain, craving the Almighty's aid for the great "English Enterprise." It was to be a sacred cause. The orders were strict that no impure thing should be allowed to approach the ships, nor even the wharves where they lay. Particularly did this apply to women of a certain class. There was to be no swearing, gambling nor quarrelling. Each galleon was christened with the name of one of the Apostles. The crews were confessed. Every morning at sunrise, the ship-boys were to sing their *Buenos Dias* at the foot of the mainmast, and at sunset the *Ave Maria*.

By the end of April everything was complete, and a great and solemn procession took place, headed by the Admiral-in-Chief and a large number of priests and monks, for the blessing of the banners in the Cathedral.

Crowds lined the path, but were lukewarm, for they were Portuguese and recently become vassals of Spain.

Philip issued his final orders ; battle was on no account to be sought for. If the Duke should happen to encounter Drake and the English fleet on his way to meet the Duke of Parma at Dunkirk, he was, if possible, to pass him by without fighting.

It was discovered too late that the provisions were all rotting and that most of the guns had far too short a range.

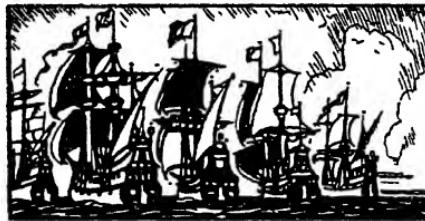
On May 20th the vast Armada set sail, and once outside the mouth of the Tagus, met the north trade wind which Santa Cruz had foretold, and their troubles began.

As they beat up against the rising gale, the fleet became broken up and had to put into Corunna to refit, and to land the sailors and soldiers who were already suffering from dysentery, due to the putrefying victuals. It was not until July 22nd that the Armada finally left the coast of Spain.

The continued dallying and exasperating delays had told on the morale of officers and men. These knew only too well, both from personal experience and from popular hearsay, the kind of enemy they were to meet. No higher testimonial to the English sailors was ever made than that by the Venetian Ambassador at the Court of Madrid, in April, when he wrote : " Surely the King of Spain will not risk everything for the sake of revenge, when he must know as all the world does, the high quality and number of English ships, and that the Englishmen are of a different quality from the Spaniards, bearing a name above all the West for being expert and enterprising in all maritime affairs, and the finest fighters upon the sea. . . . The battle, as we may well believe, seeing they are fighting for country, faith and children, will be fought with so much obstinacy as is their wont and as they openly declare is their meaning, that the

survivors of the battle will be so few, as in any event that may be pleasing to God, they have no fear their enemy will be able to come near the English shores, so well are they provided against any evil fortune that may befall." To this the Ambassador adds : " The battle will in any case be very bloody ; for the English never yield ; and although they be put to flight and broken, they ever return for revenge, to renew the attack, as long as they have a breath of life."

Thus, after five years of feverish and spasmodic preparation, the Invincible Armada at last set forth from Spain on the " English Enterprise," foredoomed to failure.



## CHAPTER XII

### THE ARMADA ARRIVES



UCH has been written about the defence of England by sea, but the fact is liable to be overlooked or forgotten that, in these years of fear of invasion, elaborate and thorough steps were taken to deal effectively with any force that succeeded in getting a footing on land.

The soldiers of Catholic Spain were, in the latter half of the sixteenth century, the finest fighting men in the world. The English army was but small, and consisted of certain regiments of veterans who had fought in the wars in Flanders. The rest of the army was composed of local troops, called up in time of national emergency and, at the best, but half-trained.

Two years before the Armada came, all the male inhabitants over the age of sixteen of the coast towns in the West country were warned to be in readiness to be enlisted and armed. A year later they had been fully armed and accoutred and were being trained. The only men excused service were those in the household service of peers.

Taking the county of Devon, which of all English counties was the most maritime, five regiments were raised, each of 500 men commanded by a General Captain, for the defence of the sea coast.

All places where an enemy was likely to land were sought for, and defences built. For the manufacture of

gunpowder, factories were erected and the ingredients hurriedly imported from abroad. Beacons were constructed on all the highest hill-tops, ready to give warning of the first appearance of an enemy fleet in the Channel.

Not only were the counties on the South Coast affected by these orders. For example, Lincolnshire was particularly warned to be ready to resist a possible landing on the coast by Parma's army.

For purposes of war, the whole country was divided into maritime and inland counties. Amongst the former it is surprising to find included both Berkshire and Huntingdonshire. To Sir John Norris fell the command of the sea coast from Norfolk to Dorset, while Lord Huntingdon was made responsible for the defence of the East Coast ; and he complained to Sir Francis Walsingham that he met with considerable opposition from the gentry of the North of England, who were unwilling to serve anywhere but on the Scottish frontier.

Every parish in the whole country had to contribute its quota of foot or horsemen. The most detailed orders were issued in case of an enemy landing. Should the beacon on Bubdowne be fired, the whole of the armed forces in Somerset were immediately to march on Dorchester, and there to await further orders.

The lighting of a beacon was not merely to warn the neighbourhood of danger, but to give the order for certain definite pre-arranged movements of troops.

Beacons erected at Sutton Poyntz, Rydeway and Blagdon in Dorset, on being fired meant that all troops were to assemble at Weymouth and Melcombe Regis.

No civilian was then, on pain of death, to leave his town or village, except by order of the Lord-Lieutenant or Justice of the county. In the case of a retreat, minute instructions were issued for the evacuation of the civil population, the removal of cattle and destruction of

bridges and buildings, with the cutting of the roads to retard the advance of the enemy.

Across the Thames, opposite Upnor Castle, the great iron chain was fixed to prevent ships from coming up the river.

Frantic efforts were being made to give the last finishing touches to the battleships.

In a letter to his brother William, the Mayor of Plymouth, written in February 1588, "at 7 of the clock at night" John Hawkins says :

"The 'Hope' and 'Nonpareil' are both graved, tallowed and this tide into the road again; and the 'Revenge,' now aground, I hope she shall likewise go into the road also to-morrow. We have, and do trim one side of every ship by night and the other side by day, so that we end the three great ships in three days this spring. The ships sit aground so strongly, and are so staunch as if they were made of a whole tree. The doing of it is very chargeable, for that it is done by torchlight and cressets, and in an extreme gale of wind, which consumes pitch, tallows and firs abundantly."

As the summer of 1588 drew on, a great military camp was formed at Tilbury, where on July 27th the Queen, dressed in a military uniform, reviewed her army. With that genius and courage which never failed her on all great occasions, she addressed her soldiers in words which no doubt went straight to the heart of every man. Sitting there erect on her charger, she spoke as follows :

"My loving people, we have been persuaded by some, that are careful of our safety, to take heed how we commit ourselves to armed multitudes, for fear of treachery; but I assure you I do not desire to live to distrust my

faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear ; I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and good will of my subjects. And therefore I am come amongst you at this time, not as for my recreation or sport, but being resolved, in the midst and heat of battle, to live or die amongst you all : to lay down, for my God, and for my Kingdom, and for my people, my honour and my blood, even in the dust. I know I have but the body of a weak and feeble woman ; but I have the heart of a king and of a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma or Spain, or any Prince of Europe, should dare to invade the borders of my realms ; to which rather than any dishonour should grow by me, I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your general, judge and rewarder of your victories in the field . . . and we do assure you on the word of a Prince, they shall be duly paid you . . . not doubting, by your concord in the camp, and your valour in the field, we shall shortly have a famous victory, over those enemies of my God, of my kingdom, and of my people."

How those English soldiers must have cheered and cheered again.

In the end, as we know, these soldiers were never called upon to show their valour, but there is no doubt that, had Parma ever succeeded in landing his army, they would not have made the straight and unopposed march on London which had been promised by the wise-*acres* at Madrid.

July came, but still no definite news of the approach of the Armada ; nothing but rumours and counter rumours of the Spaniards having left Corunna. All through the early part of July the English were on the look out, with the fleet spread out fan-like between Ushant and the Scilly Isles. This fleet, like all Gaul, was divided into

three parts: Lord Howard of Effingham, the Lord Admiral, commanded the largest division and took the middle station; between him and the French coast was the Vice-Admiral, Sir Francis Drake; while between the Admiral and the Scilly Isles was the squadron of the Rear-Admiral, Captain John Hawkins. On July 12th, owing to hard gales, the whole fleet was forced to return to Plymouth harbour.

On going ashore Hawkins heard that his enemies in London were still busy. It had happened that the "Hope," a vessel of 600 tons, had sprung a small leak and gone into port for repair. This was too good an opportunity to be let pass and the gossips and disappointed office-holders had not hesitated to make much of it.

The matter naturally came to the ears of the Lord Admiral who, on July 17th, wrote to Walsingham from Plymouth: "I have heard that there is in London some hard speeches against Mr. Hawkins because the 'Hope' came in to mend a leak she had. Sir, I think there were never so many of the Prince's ships so long abroad and in such seas with such weather as these have had with so few leaks and the greatest fault of the 'Hope' came with ill grounding before our coming hither, and yet it is nothing to be spoken of; it was such a leak that I would have gone with it to Venice."

Such was the reply of the Lord High Admiral; and it must have proved as sweet to the ears of Hawkins as it was bitter to those of his slanderers.

At the risk of being tedious, a letter from Hawkins will be inserted here, addressed to Burghley. It was written only two days before the Armada was reported in the Channel. It is of special interest since it is the very last report on the condition of the fleet before it was to undergo its crucial test. It is significant, also, because it shows that the authorities still believed the Armada

was lying in the harbour at Corunna and that the plan of Hawkins and Drake to counter the invasion, by sending the English fleet to fight them off the Spanish coast, was still under serious consideration.

This letter is dated from Plymouth, July 17th, 1588, and runs as follows :

“ My bounden duty remembered unto your good lordship : By the letter and estimate enclosed, your Lordship may see how charges doth grow here daily. My Lord Admiral doth endeavour by all means to shorten it, and yet to keep the navy in strength.

“ The four great ships—the ‘Triumph,’ the ‘Elizabeth Jonas,’ the ‘Bear,’ and the ‘Victory’—are in most royal and perfect state ; and it is not seen by them, neither do they feel that they have been at sea, more than if they had ridden at Chatham. Yet there be some in them that have no good will to see the coast of Spain with them, but cast many doubts how they will do in that seas. But, my good Lord, I see no more danger in them, I thank God, than in others. The ‘Bear’ one day had a leak upon which there grew much ado ; and when it was determined that she should be lighted of ordnance, her ballast taken out, and so grounded and searched, and that my Lord Admiral would not consent to send her home, the leak was presently stopped of itself ; and so the ship proceedeth with her fellows, in good and royal estate. God be thanked. I was bold to trouble your Lordship with these few words touching these four ships, because I know there will be reports as men are affected : but this is the truth.

“ The strength of the ships generally is well tried ; for they stick not to ground often to tallow, to wash, or any such small cause, which is a most sure trial of the goodness of the ships when they are able to abide the ground. My Lord Admiral doth not ground with his ship, but

showeth a good example, and doth shun changes as much as his Lordship may possible. And so I leave to trouble your good Lordship.

“ From Plymouth, the 17th of July, 1588.

“ Your honourable Lordship’s humbly to command,  
“ JOHN HAWKYNS.”

Enclosed with this letter, he sent a detailed account of the total costs of expenses incurred by the fleet under the Lord High Admiral since February 11th, previously.

At last, on July 19th, the first definite news arrived of the enemy’s approach. This was brought by one Captain Thomas Flemming, in his vessel the “ Golden Hind,” which was often referred to as the “ bark Flemyngh,” in accordance with the custom of the time to name a ship after her owner.

If we are to believe Sir William Monson, this Flemming was no better than a “ pirrate late at sea a-pilfering,” and the popular idea has always been that there was a price on his head, but that for love of Country and Queen he gave himself up in order to give warning of the approach of the Armada. Pleasing as this is, yet it seems unlikely that he was a pirate, since he was a close relation of the Hawkins family, and was afterwards given the command of a Queen’s ship, and also served under the Earl of Cumberland.

The long expected news set the whole country astir. Unfortunately, the gale which brought the Armada up Channel made it extremely difficult to get the English fleet out of Plymouth harbour, where it was bottled up by the south-westerly wind.

The force which Howard commanded consisted of eleven great ships and eight pinnaces, all of the Royal Navy, and a splendidly equipped squadron of sixteen great ships and four pinnaces furnished by the city of London. In addition was a small squadron, under the

command of Lord Charles Howard, made up of private men-of-war, lent by him and other owners to the Queen, and which was regarded as part of the Royal Navy. To augment this powerful force, every port on the South Coast had sent its quota of armed ships as well as many more from the west of England and the Bristol Channel, making in all a formidable fleet of over forty galleons and ships, as well as numerous smaller vessels. In addition to these Sir Francis Drake had brought into Plymouth sixty sail "very well appointed." Although contemporary accounts differ, the total English fleet at Plymouth must have amounted in all to at least one hundred sail, which included sixty-nine galleons and great ships, with crews totalling about ten thousand men.

Owing to the various misfortunes that had befallen Sidonia since he left Lisbon, there can have been but little difference between the numbers of ships in the two hostile fleets, which were so soon to meet in combat.

As far as crews, seamanship, guns and proximity to his base went, all was in favour of Howard, while Sidonia could boast a large majority in the number of soldiers and tonnage ; and this was all, except for the one chance factor which was offered him, but which he missed, of surprising the English fleet bottled up in Plymouth harbour. Had Santa Cruz been alive and in command, he would never have missed such a golden opportunity to attack. But Sidonia, a confessed landsman, hesitated, ordered his fleet to anchor, and signalled for the council-of-war to come aboard his flagship to discuss the situation. Half through the night they wrangled, and when day dawned the chance was lost. By almost superhuman efforts of strength, perseverance and discipline, the whole of the English battleships had been warped out, leaving only the smaller vessels to follow later, as best they could. Before the astonished eyes of the Spanish Admirals,

there lay drawn up fifty-four great English men-of-war, ready to attack.

Now began the final struggle between the two Navies, the two greatest fleets that the world had ever known. It was the popular belief, until lately, that the elements or bad luck, rather than the English Navy, defeated the Armada. This view was partly due to the modesty of the Elizabethan sailors who, when all was over proclaimed that "God blew, and they were scattered."

The Navy was then, as now, the silent service, and the war correspondent was not born. It has been clearly shown by Sir Julian Corbett that the Spanish Armada was beaten, fairly and squarely, by the English fleet, through superior seamanship, superior ships and crews, and better guns and gunnery. The winds of heaven which the English declared blew for them did nothing of the sort. If anything they blew in favour of the enemy. But the English Admirals, particularly Drake, knew how to use every wind and change of wind for their own benefit, and time and again outwitted and outmanœuvred the slower Spaniards. But it must not be supposed that the Armada was merely a lumbering company of unwieldy hulks, blown hither and thither before the wind. Although they could not compare in swiftness nor handiness to the English, they were fine ships of an already old-fashioned type, commanded by some of the most skilful and wise navigators in the world.

Sidonia, having missed his chance at Plymouth, decided to attempt a landing on the Isle of Wight, to use as a base for his fleet during the embarkation of the Duke of Parma's army. But again he was frustrated by the manœuvres of the English and their cursed artillery, which never gave him a chance to grapple with his elusive enemy, but merely made cannon fodder of his packed musketeers drawn up in ranks on the decks of his great ships.

It was during this night, when Drake had the honour of leading the fleet, that a curious incident took place. High up on the poop of the "Revenge" burned the great lamp which gave direction to the following fleet. Suddenly the light disappeared, and no one knew what had happened. Some of the Captains immediately hove-to, others shortened sail, while Howard and a few others pressed on after the enemy.

Shortly afterwards dawn broke and the English fleet was in confusion, and the "Revenge" nowhere to be seen. What had happened was that, in the night, Drake had observed four strange craft stealing past to seaward, and he had immediately followed them to ascertain if they were enemy ships attempting to weather him.

On overhauling them, they turned out to be German merchantmen and were allowed to go.

On his way back to rejoin the fleet, in company with the "Roebuck," Drake fell in with Don Pedro de Valdes' ship, "Our Lady of the Rosary," disabled on the previous day in an engagement between several Portuguese galleons, and Hawkins, Drake and Frobisher. The Spaniard was at once called upon to surrender ; but he refused, until informed that the renowned Drake was on board the English ship, when he struck without more ado. Don Pedro, with his forty officers and all his treasure, was transferred to the "Revenge," while the "Roebuck" was ordered to escort the prize to Torbay. Later on in the same day, another prize fell to the English. This was the "San Salvador," which was captured by Lord Charles Howard and Hawkins and carried to Weymouth.

When Hawkins boarded the prize, he found that a fearful explosion had taken place, which had driven the survivors to take to their boats ; but he did not remain long because "the stink in the ship was so unsavoury and the sight within board so ugly."



THE CAPTURE OF THE "SANTA ANNA"  
BY SIR JOHN HAWKINS

*From the engraving by John Pine of the Armada  
tapestries originally in the House of Lords*

During the night the wind dropped, and the two fleets lay becalmed between Portland and St. Alban's Head, scarcely a cannon shot apart.

When the moon rose it was seen that a group of English ships had become separated from the rest of the fleet, and owing to the calm it was impossible to render them any help. Now, if ever, was the opportunity for the Spanish galleases. These craft, which proved so useless to the Spaniards, were propelled by banks of oars, to which slaves or criminals were chained. In smooth seas, particularly in a calm, they had the great advantage over sailing ships of being able to move quickly.

Had the Spaniards attacked with them immediately, the separated English ships would have been at their mercy. The moment the situation became apparent, the Spanish Admirals, Recalde and Leyva, sent urgent messages to Sidonia to waste not one moment in attacking with his galleases, and forcing a close action by boarding. Sidonia for once was persuaded to act promptly, but alas for Spanish discipline and Spanish grandees ! It had happened only a few hours earlier that Don Hugo de Monçada, who commanded the galleases, had received an order from the Commander-in-Chief, which he considered to be an insult to one of his high birth and rank.

The result was that, instead of obeying, he and his galleases withdrew in high dudgeon and refused to move against the enemy. Thus the Spaniards missed the second and, as it proved, the last golden opportunity offered them to get the better of their enemies.

At five o'clock in the morning the wind rose, and Sidonia gave the signal to renew the fight ; a sharp general action followed, in which Hawkins in the "Victory" took a prominent part. This action ended for want of gunpowder, as did several other engagements. Although owing to their rapid gunfire the English used up more powder than the Spaniards, they had the great

advantage, from being near their own coasts, of receiving fresh supplies, as well as reinforcements of men, from the various ports in the neighbourhood. In fact, the eager volunteers who kept coming out to join the fleet as it proceeded up the Channel proved not a little embarrassing to the English Admiral, for most of the ships they came out in were small, while their captains and crews, although bursting with military ardour, were more apt to get in the way than to be of use.

It was on Friday, July 26th, following this battle, which each side proclaimed to be a victory, that Lord Howard summoned on board his flagship Hawkins and Frobisher, and there knighted them.

Hawkins was in his fifty-seventh year when he received this crowning honour to his years of service, and one can well imagine, as Mr. Williamson points out, that the Admiral would much prefer to receive his knighthood kneeling on the deck of the flagship, in the presence of the enemy and his men, rather than at Court, even at the hand of his Monarch.

Two days later, on July 28th, the Armada, with the English in constant and close attendance, anchored off Calais, and Medina Sidonia immediately despatched couriers by land to inform the Prince of Parma of his arrival, and urging him to embark his army and put to sea without delay. Sidonia knew only too well the desperate situation he was in, and his anxiety had not been alleviated by the warning he received from the Governor of Calais, that he was in great danger of disaster in his present anchorage, since at any moment the wind might change and he would then find himself and his fleet trapped. Parma replied that he was not yet ready to embark, and would not be for at least a fortnight, and that in any case the Dutch were watching his ports. Further, he told Sidonia that he must first conquer and destroy the English fleet, and then seize a port of

disembarkation before any thought of transporting his army to England could be entertained.

In the meantime, the English fleet was further strengthened by the arrival of Lord Henry Seymour and his squadron. Seeing there was nothing else to be done for the present, Sidonia anchored, waiting in the hope that the English fleet would be starved out and have to return to their home ports to revictual, for he saw no other way out of the situation. However, this policy of inaction was the last thing likely to appeal either to Howard, Drake or Hawkins, who saw clearly enough that they had the enemy in their grasp. That very night a plot was hatched which, when put into action, met with overwhelming success. In the middle of Sunday night, the terrified Spaniards suddenly beheld bearing straight down on them eight ships in flames ; "spouting fire" as one of the Spaniards described it, "and their ordnance shooting, which was a horror to see in the night."

Pandemonium broke out ; ships collided and fouled one another. By morning most of the Spanish fleet, having cut their cables, had got outside the harbour, but were in no sort of order or arrangement.

One of the great galleons was seen to be in difficulties, and Howard himself went in and attacked and plundered her.

Alas for poor Sidonia, the heretic dogs gave him no peace nor time to recover ! Before he could collect and reorganize his bewildered and scattered forces, the English were at his throat. This was on Monday, July 29th—"a day of onsets and despair" the Spaniards called it—when the English attacked with all their fleet and for eight hours kept up a terrific and unheard of bombardment, which only ceased when the powder ran out.

The gale was rapidly driving the defeated Armada on to the sand-banks, and the victorious English fleet lay

to and watched for the final catastrophe, when all of a sudden the wind veered round a few points, and the Spaniards managed to wriggle out from the very jaws of death. But the battle of Gravelines had been won and lost, the greatest sea battle that had ever been fought; and the turning point in the history of Spain and England, as naval powers, had arrived. The "English Enterprise" was over.

Before a fair gale, Sidonia and his wounded galleons were thankful to escape northwards, into the German Ocean. Howard and his fleet followed them as far as the Firth of Forth. After that they knew all danger was past, and the enemy might be left to find their way home as best they could.

Then disappeared into the Northern mists the miserable Armada, once the pride of a conquering race, now the shameful survival of man's ambition. Even now the tragedy was not complete. In storm and sleet, the crippled galleons ran blindly on, some to be piled up on the rock-bound coast of Scotland, others, twelve great ships, to be cast up and broken on the barren Irish shore. There thousands of gallant Spaniards were washed ashore, only to be slaughtered by the wild Irish, or else to escape to be hanged by the English garrisons.

Of the brave and much blessed company which left Corunna on July 22nd, but sixty worn and battered ships returned to Spain.

Out of the thirty thousand men who left their homes to punish the heretics of the North, scarcely ten thousand starving, broken men returned to tell the tale.

Of the survivors who reached home, Recalde died at Corunna of grief and misery two days after his arrival, while Oquendo, another gallant Spanish Admiral, refused to see even his wife and child, but shut himself up in a solitary room, and turning his face to the wall, died of shame.

As to the Duke of Medina Sidonia, a howl of rage rose all over Spain when he returned, but King Philip, remembering perhaps that it was he rather than the Duke who was to blame, forgave him, and another was found to be a scapegoat in his stead.



## CHAPTER XIII

### A F T E R M A T H



BEFORE following the enemy northward, the indefatigable Hawkins found time to write and send to Sir Francis Walsingham a long and detailed report, giving an account of the Armada from the day it departed from Spain until the defeat at Gravelines. It is a sober document, offering much thanks to God for his favours and blessings. As usual the Rear-Admiral's chief concern, now that the fighting was over, was for the men who had fought so bravely for their country. "The men," he writes, "have been long unpaid and need relief. I pray your lordship that the money that should have gone to Plymouth may now be sent to Dover. August now cometh in and this coast will spend ground tackle, cordage, cannons and victuals, all which should be sent to Dover in good plenty." The business-like Treasurer was not to lose his caution, because the nation was wild with rejoicings over victory. "I write to your lordship briefly and plainly. Your wisdom and experience is great, but this is a matter far passing all that hath been seen in our time or long before. So praying God for a happy deliverance from the malicious and dangerous practice of our enemies, I humbly take my leave. From the sea, aboard the 'Victory,' the last of July, 1588. The Spaniards take their course for Scotland: my lord doth follow them. I doubt not, with God's favour, we shall impeach their landing.

There must be order for victual and money, powder and shot, to be sent after us.

“ Your lordship’s humbly to command,

“ JOHN HAWKYNS.”

After escorting, or rather driving, the Armada beyond the Firth of Forth, when danger of a Spanish landing was over, Howard signalled his fleet to put about and return South. He was glad to be able to do this: the wind had risen to a gale, he was short of victuals and powder, and his crews were exhausted. Had the Spaniards but known it, the manœuvre in the North Sea was a bold piece of bluff, keeping “a brag countenance” the Admiral called it, for the English had spent all their gunpowder, and if the Spaniards had decided to turn and sail back to the Channel nothing could have prevented them. On board the English ships the tired sailors were existing on bad beer and starvation rations of salt beef and fish. Little wonder that sickness had broken out, and that each day numbers of sailors went down with dysentery. Fighting their way South in a violent gale the fleet became separated. Howard with his ships reached Margate, Hawkins was fortunate to get into Harwich, while the rest of the fleet found shelter in the Downs. By this time the condition of the crews had become desperate. Boat-load after boat-load of sick and dying men were rowed ashore from the fleet, and landed at Margate and Harwich. Soon every barn and shed was full and overflowing, and the sick were laid down in the streets and alleys to fend for themselves.

Howard and Hawkins did all in their power to find shelter, food and medicines to succour their men. But little could be done. The authorities at London were either callous or indifferent. “ It would grieve any man’s heart,” wrote Howard in a letter to Burghley, on

August 20th, "to see men who had served so valiantly die so miserably." Still no food was sent to feed the starving sailors. Two days later Howard wrote again, to implore the Council to do something, and, if they did not send food, at least to send money to pay the sailors a little of their well-earned wages, wherewith to buy food and clothing.

At the battle of Gravelines, scarcely sixty Englishmen had been killed, yet now, but one month later, whole crews were sick and dying with hardly enough men left in most ships to weigh the anchor.

The meanness of the Government seems almost beyond belief. Rather than pay up what they owed, they deliberately delayed with the idea that by so doing more men would die and so leave fewer to pay. Hawkins indignant at the niggardly way the men were being treated, wrote boldly to Lord Burghley : "Your lordship may think that by death, discharging of sick, etc. something may be spared in the general pay. Thos that die their friends require their pay. For those which are discharged we take on fresh men, which breeds a far greater charge."

The men were not only starving, but they had little else than rags to cover themselves with. Howard seeing the desperate situation, wrote again to Burghley " It were marvellous good a thousand pounds' worth of hose, doublets, shoes, shirts and such-like were sent down with all expedition, else in a very short time I look to see most of the mariners go naked."

Howard and Hawkins did what they could with their own money to help their men ; but this fell far short of what was needed. At last Howard, driven to distraction took 3000 Spanish pistoles out of the "Capitana" to meet the more urgent expenses of the fleet. For this act of common sense and common duty he was actually charged with theft. To defend himself he wrote to

Walsingham : “ I did take them as I told you I would : for, by Jesus, I had not £3. 0. 0. left in the world, and have not anything that could get money in London—my plate was gone before. But I will repay it within ten days of my coming home. I pray you let Her Majesty know so : and by the Lord God of Heaven, I had not one crown more and had it not been of mere necessity, I would not have touched one : but if I had not some to have bestowed upon some poor, miserable man, I should have wished myself out of the world.”

There seems to have been no device too mean by which the Queen, or her councillors, endeavoured to escape paying their debts of honour. Amongst the items of expenditure for which the Lord Admiral was called to account was one of £620, for “ extraordinary kinds of victuals, wine etc., distributed among the ships for the relief of the sick and wounded men.” But even this the Queen refused to pass, so that Howard in disgust finally struck the item out of his account, adding, “ I will myself make satisfaction as well as I may, so that Her Majesty shall not be charged withal.”

Leaving this unedifying subject for the present, let us return to Harwich, where Hawkins was doing his utmost to deal with a most harrowing situation. It was on August 8th that he brought in his fleet from the North Sea. This consisted of thirty-five vessels, nine of which were Queen’s ships, nine London privateers, the remaining seventeen being private ships from Plymouth, Dartmouth and the Western ports.

When they cast anchor at the Essex port, the crews were literally starving. For eight days they had subsisted on rations issued in Scotland and meant to last three. By great good fortune they found at Harwich some hoxys containing beer and bread, and this saved them for a while.

Leaving his sick at Harwich, Hawkins sailed in wild weather to join the Admiral at Margate, carrying with him the provisions taken out of the hoys.

Arrived at Margate, the seas were so high that the ships were unable to communicate with the shore.

Then suddenly a rumour began to spread that the Spanish Armada was returning. No one had certain nor direct news, but almost everybody appeared to know of some one else who had. And so the story spread with all the fulsome detail which such fables gather. Like the story of the snow-sprinkled Russian soldiers who were reported to have been seen travelling hither and thither in railway carriages all over Scotland and England in August, 1914, so the story of the progress of the Spanish fleet southwards was passed from mouth to mouth. It was not only the common folk who believed it, for those in high places thought it might be true. Panic ensued. If the enemy had returned, the English would be at their mercy ; crews dead and dying or on the verge of mutiny ; no victuals, no gunpowder. Howard himself had confessed to bluffing the enemy when he said he was putting on a "brag countenance" in chasing the flying foe, being even then without powder and with but a pitiful supply of victuals.

Drake, no scaremonger, believed the reports might be true, and begged to be allowed to take a small fleet to watch for Parma, in case he should make an attempt to ferry his army across the Channel. But fortunately the rumour proved a myth, for by this time the Invincible Armada was struggling desperately to weather the North of Scotland in the worst summer gales in the memory of living man.

In the meantime England rejoiced. On August 12th the victory was proclaimed. The Queen commanded public prayer and thanksgiving to be made in every church in the land. Later she went in triumphal pro-

cession from Somerset House, through Temple Bar to St. Paul's, to return thanks to God, where, after listening to a sermon, she ordered the Spanish colours, taken in the war, to be set up and shown to the people. All the greatest in the land walked in that procession, except the sailors. Noblemen, followed by Schools of Clerks of Chancery, Star Chamber and the Signet, moved proudly along with quantities of Chaplains, Judges, Barons, and Ambassadors. Masters of the great Wardrobe and the Jewel House marched cheek by jowl with Doctors of Physic and Masters of the Revels. Altogether it was a brave and inspiring spectacle.

God had given the victory to His chosen, although the seamen, who with God's aid had fought and won the fight, were conspicuous by their absence, they were afterwards remembered, and the survivors were at last paid their wages and the wounded and maimed awarded pensions.

These same sailors were modest men. They did not boast nor brag that their superior skill or bravery had defeated the Spaniards ; they wished it to be known that "God blew, and they were scattered," and so it was believed for many a year afterwards.

As soon as the first flush of victory was over, the Queen and her councillors became alarmed over the confused state of the naval accounts. So complete was the muddle that no one could disentangle it, and so as usual they turned to the only man in the country who could be relied on to put matters straight. Needless to say this was John Hawkins. Owing to the vacillation and unreadiness of the Government, ships put into commission one day were ordered to be dismantled the next. Crews having been suddenly disbanded, a panic arose and fresh crews had to be found and enlisted. While the Armada was in the Channel, and Hawkins was at sea, all method went by the board. As ever, Hawkins

was looked to to right things and put the accounts in shipshape order.

Burghley had been harrying Hawkins, while he was still with the fleet off Margate, to send him full returns of the crews on the pay list.

It fell to the duty of Hawkins, as Navy Treasurer, to pay off the crews, while Burghley as Lord Treasurer had to find the money.

The long-suffering Admiral at last, on receipt of a more than usually unfriendly letter from Burghley, replied on August 28th as follows :

“ My HONOURABLE GOOD LORD,

“ I am sorry I do live so long to receive so sharp a letter from your lordship considering how carefully I take care to do all for the best and to ease charge.” After reminding him that he had already sent full particulars of the ships’ crews and numbers, he points out that he “ had but one day to travail in, and then I discharged many after the rate that I thought my money would reach but after that day I could hardly row from ship to ship, the weather hath been continually so frightful. . . . I am in gathering of a book of all those that have served, and the quality and time of their service, as I can overcome it. . . . Some I have discharged with fair words (*i.e.* without money), some are so miserable and needy that they are holpen with tickets to the victuallers for some victuals to help them home ; and some with a portion of money, such as my Lord Admiral will appoint to relieve their sick men and to relieve some of the needy sort, to avoid exclamation.” After further details of the measures by which he proposed to deal with the discharging of all soldiers and sailors not required to look after the ships, he goes on in a more bitter vein : “ It shall hereafter be more offence to your lordship that I do so much alone ; for with

God's favour I will and must leave all (*i.e.* resign) I pray God I may end this account to Her Majesty's and your liking and avoid my own undoing ; and I trust God will so provide for me as I shall never meddle with such intricate matters more, for they be importable for any man to please and overcome it." In a voice of despair, unusual to the stolid and unemotional Hawkins he ends his letter : " If I had an enemy, I would wish him no more harm than the course of my troublesome and painful life ; but hereunto, and to God's good providence we are born."

Try as he would Hawkins could not satisfy the Lord Treasurer.

So bullied was he by the stream of letters of complaint from Burghley, that he was driven to write to Walsingham : " I know I shall never please his lordship two months together, for which I am very sorry. . . . My pain and misery in this service is infinite. Every man would have his turn served, though very unreasonable ; yet if he refused, then adieu friendship." And then in all bitterness of his soul he adds : " God, I trust will deliver me of it ere it be long, for there is no other hell."

Finding at last that even his never flagging industry could not cope with the management of the fleet, the repairs, paying off and discharging the sailors, and yet do his accounts, on December 14th he applied to the Privy Council to be granted a year's leave in which to devote his whole time and energy to the ordering of the accounts ; on January 1st, 1589, his request was granted, and on his recommendation his brother-in-law Edward Fenton was appointed to superintend the affairs of the Navy Board.

If Sir John Hawkins believed that he was to have a year undisturbed in which to disentangle the muddled accounts, he was sorely disappointed. Early in the year

his two old colleagues on the Navy Board, Sir William Winter and William Holstocke, both died. The former, although a very old man, had fought at Gravelines in command of the "Vanguard," where he received a wound. The loss of these two threw much administration work on the shoulders of Hawkins.

To show how highly the Government thought of their Treasurer, they promptly appointed him to the post of Comptroller in the place of Holstocke. This post, although it entailed more work, gave Hawkins the increase in salary which he badly needed. In spite of all the slanderous rumours which gave out that the Treasurer had feathered his nest during his years of office, this was far from being the case. Time and again, owing to the niggardly way the Queen wriggled out of her just debts, Hawkins had to dip deeply into his own pockets to make the accounts tally. To raise this money he had to work hard to keep his own private business as a merchant adventurer in a prosperous state. In October of this year his brother William died, at the age of seventy. His body was interred in the church of St. Nicholas at Deptford, where John erected a monument to his memory. The inscription was in Latin and the translation into English runs as follows :

" To the ever living memory of William Hawkyns of Plymouth esquire ; who was a worshipper of the true religion ; a munificent benefactor to poor mariners ; skilled in navigation ; oftentimes undertaking long voyages ; a just arbiter in difficult cases ; and a man of singular faith, probity and providence. He had two wives, four children by one, and seven by the other. John Hawkyns, Knight, Treasurer of the Queen's Navy, his brother, most sorrowfully erected this. He died in the sure and certain hope of resurrection on the 7th day of October, in the year of our Lord, 1589."

These were the words with which John paid his last tribute and testimonial to his elder brother, and he could have chosen no better words to describe his own character.

While Hawkins was toiling to get straight the Navy accounts, he never forgot the seamen. For the benefit of the sailors who had been wounded or incapacitated in the Armada, or otherwise suffered for the State, he and Drake founded the "Chest of Chatham," which became in after years the Greenwich Hospital Fund. To provide the money to pay the pensions, every able seaman had to contribute sixpence a month of his wages to the fund.

Not content with this, John Hawkins himself inaugurated another charity which exists to this day. This was the Sir John Hawkins Hospital, which he founded in 1594 for the accommodation of ten poor decayed mariners and shipwrights at Chatham. Two years later the Queen granted the charity a charter which is still preserved in an oak chest on which are engraved the arms of John Hawkins. Twenty-six governors were nominated with the Archbishop of Canterbury at the head, followed by the Bishop of Rochester, the Lord High Admiral, the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, and other important persons, as well as by six principal master mariners, and two principal shipwrights. To endow the hospital the founder conveyed land and titles. During his lifetime Hawkins retained the right to appoint his beneficiaries, which after his death passed to the governors.

No person was eligible to be received into the hospital who had not been "maimed, disabled or brought to poverty" while in the naval service of England. Each of the ten pensioners received a gratuity of two shillings a week. No doubt this haven of rest for broken seamen was to John Hawkins a source of genuine pleasure.

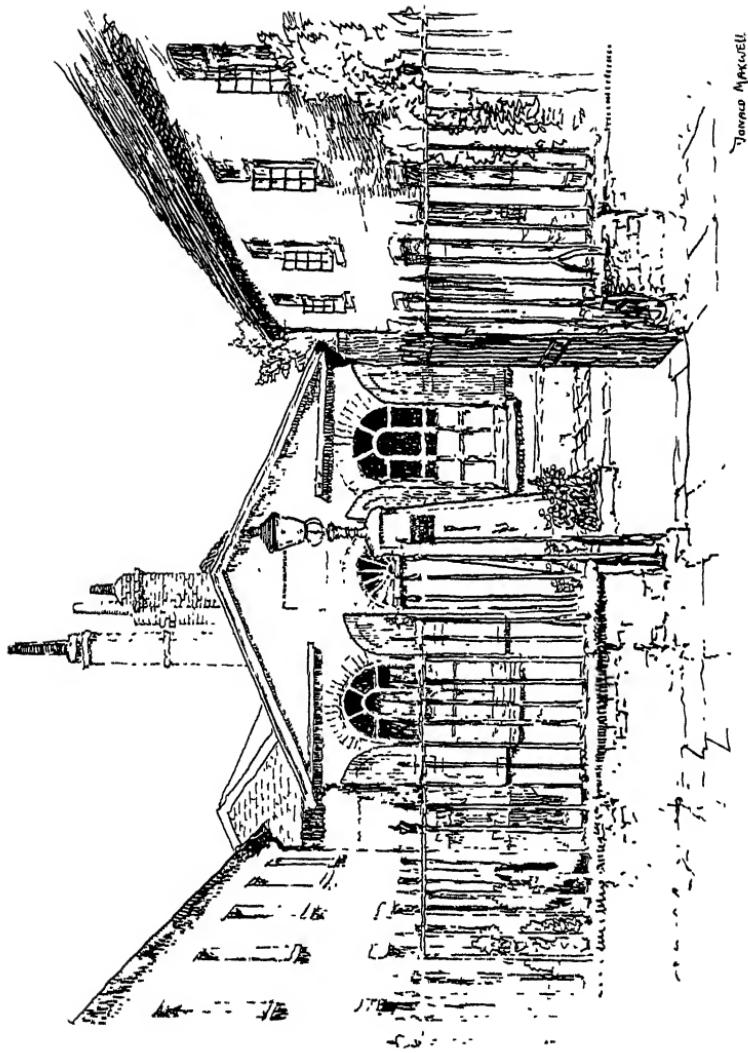
Once the Armada was defeated, and the country had recovered from its orgy of rejoicing, it began to be apparent to the Government that no time should be lost in taking advantage of the crushed and demoralized state of Spain to establish yet further the recent English advantage.

A convenient stick with which to beat the enemy was found in the inert and somewhat inconsequential claimant to the throne of Portugal, Don Antonio.

On the advice of Drake, the Government agreed to send out a strong expedition to Portugal under Drake, who was to land an army, commanded by Sir John Norris, who had already won renown for himself in the wars in Ireland and the Low Countries. The plan was to land the troops some miles below Lisbon and to march on the city, while a simultaneous attack was carried out by the fleet.

But, like so many of Elizabeth's plans, this one went awry through ill-preparation and hesitation. Delay after delay kept the fleet from departing until April, 1589, when Plymouth was relieved to see the last of the drunken and disorderly soldiers who had idled there for weeks. Even when at last they sailed they left short of victuals. This was one of the outstanding differences between the two great sailors, Drake and Hawkins. Drake, ever a brilliant and successful opportunist, was apt to leave the question of victuals and supplies more or less to chance, while the less dashing but more careful Hawkins never once undertook any expedition without calculating, down to the last ounce of food or dram of powder, what his ships and crews would need.

On his way to Lisbon Drake called at Corunna, where he landed his troops, seized the lower town, but failed to take the fortress, owing to the soldiers becoming drunk on the wine they found in the Spanish houses. The army was already becoming weak and demoralized



THE SIR JOHN HAWKINS  
HOSPITAL AT CHATHAM

*From a drawing by Donald Maxwell*

by disease and want of discipline, so that by the time they were landed at Peniche, on the banks of the Tagus, they were more an armed rabble than an army of trained soldiers.

From now onwards things went from bad to worse. The English Government had been assured by those who were supposed to know, that the people of Portugal, crushed beneath the Spanish yoke, would rise to a man to welcome the English deliverers, and to restore Don Antonio to the throne. But when the time and the English came they did nothing of the sort. Then, again, it was expected that the weak Spanish garrison in Lisbon would capitulate at the first attack, but once more the prophets were wrong, for the Spanish soldiers stood their ground most gallantly.

It had been arranged that when Norris reached the walls of Lisbon and was ready to attack, Drake with his fleet should simultaneously attack the city from the river front. But no Drake and no fleet arrived; instead they lay, for some unknown reason, at anchor far below the city. At last Norris, at the head of a mob of sick and dying men, had to beat an inglorious retreat and re-embark as best he could.

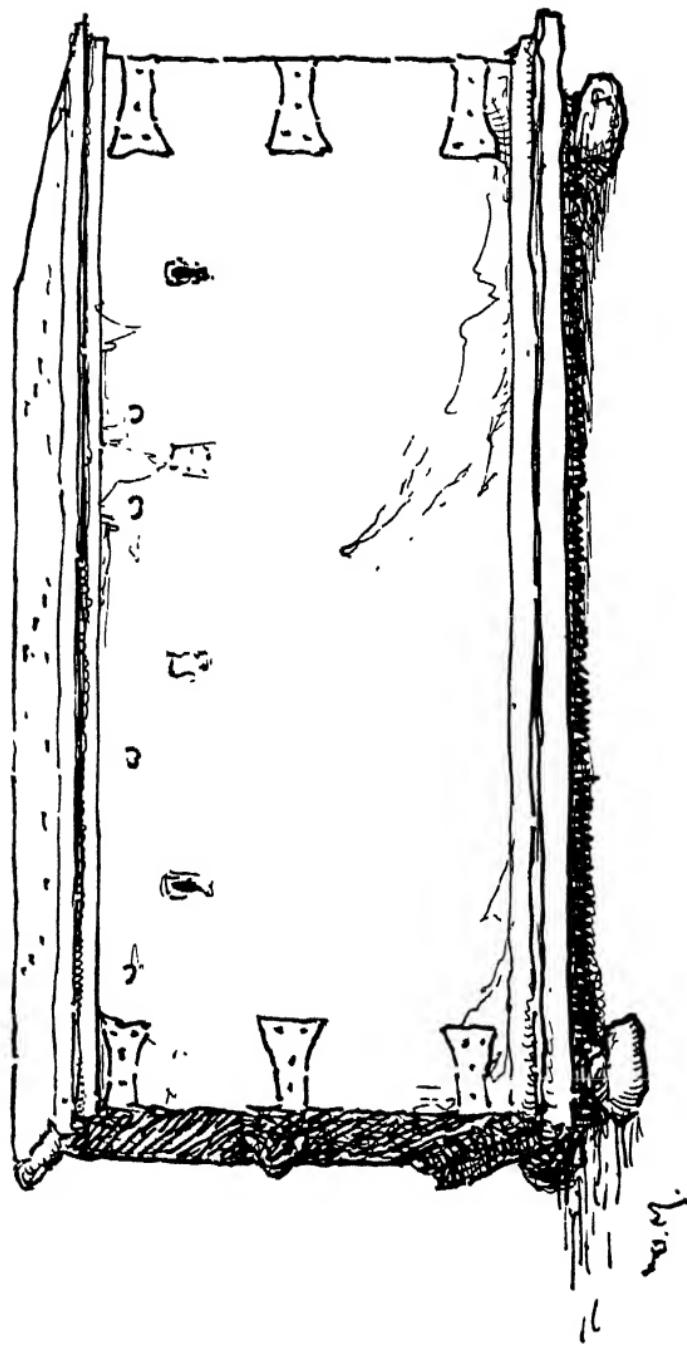
This disastrous expedition ended by its return to England at the end of June, with nothing to show for their pains but the loss of large numbers of men, and much money. But it taught, or should have taught, the Government several lessons. One was that, although Drake was a brilliant navigator and fighter on a purely naval adventure, he was not a success in military engagements on land, nor when he had to share the command. Another was that the English army was in no way to be compared to the English navy, nor the English soldier, as a fighting man, to the English sailor. Of army officers, England could boast of men of the highest ability, but the rank and file were of very inferior

quality compared to the Continental armies, particularly to the well-trained and disciplined Spanish veterans.

The Queen, who never forgave ill success, made no effort to hide her disgust at Drake's failure at Lisbon, and for several years he ceased to bask in the sunshine of Gloriana's countenance.

John Hawkins had remained at home during the Portuguese expedition, and the only part in it that he or his brother took was to become subscribers towards the cost. Had he taken an active part, there is no doubt that the victualling and other arrangements would have been properly and thoroughly carried out. Hawkins was all for "good order," as he says in a letter to Burghley within a month after the return of Drake, "by good order good effects will follow." It was in this same letter that Hawkins harped back to a plan which he had drawn up while lying at Queenborough with the Lord Admiral in December, 1587. In this document, after advising against any attempt at invasions of foreign countries, but rather keeping to the sea, he urged the Queen to keep a fleet of six big and six small warships, constantly plying between Spain and the Azores. This fleet was to be victualled for four months, and at the expiration of that time be relieved by another fleet. With his usual business-like regard for detail, he worked it out that 1800 men would be required to man each squadron, and that the monthly cost would be £2730, "and it will be a very bad and unlucky month that they will not bring in treble that charge, for they can see nothing but it will hardly escape them."

Had this plan of permanent blockade been carried out it would have been difficult for Spain to hold out for long. By this means, every carrick or galleon from the East or West Indies would have had to run the gauntlet of the English squadron, before reaching safety in a Spanish port.



*From a drawing by Donald Maxwell*  
CHEST AT THE SIR JOHN HAWKINS HOSPITAL,  
CHATHAM, WHICH CONTAINED THE ORIGINAL CHARTER

Not only was Hawkins ready with his plan, but he was prepared to go himself in command of the first squadron which should be sent out.

In a fourth letter to Burghley on the same subject, he reveals himself in many ways. One thing he shows is that any animosity he had felt towards the Lord High Treasurer was now a thing of the past. This letter, written in Hawkins' fifty-seventh year, is couched in the following fine Elizabethan style :

“ And forasmuch as I shall never be able to end my days in a more godly cause for the church of God, a more dutiful service to her Majesty, or a more profitable service for our country, I did desire this way chiefly for that I know this thing executed to order will work great effect and fit best for the ability of this commonwealth to maintain ; and thereupon offer myself and my ability to execute it. By which example I doubt not but other more able than myself in ability and knowledge will for the like good endeavour to continue their good purpose.”

Harping back to the old treachery at San Juan de Ulua he shows that he no longer feels the sting :

“ The revenge which I desired long since for the injuries I received of the Spaniards, time hath made me forget it and refer it to God, who is the avenger of wrongs.”

The next paragraph gives a hint of his sense of approaching old age :

“ My years requireth rest from enterprising matters of importance. I am out of debt, and no children to care for ; and although not rich yet contented with mine estate. I can within this month satisfy your lordship

plainly in what estate I stand with Her Majesty in mine accompts, which I am sure will be found that I shall not be in debt. And touching mine own contention, in my wife, my friends, or any other worldly matter, I am as well pleased and contented as I desire ; all which I lay aside and forego if it shall be thought meet by Her Majesty that I shall proceed in this service, which I doubt not but our good God shall bless with a happy success, being intended chiefly for his glory ; and so humbly take my leave of your lordship, from Deptford, the vjth of July, 1589."

At first this scheme of Hawkins, by which a permanent blockade should be made on the Spanish ports, was looked upon with some favour. But, as ever, the Queen and Burghley preferred their old principle of living, politically, from hand to mouth. Instead of undertaking a set policy of steady pressure on Spain, they fell back upon the old system of sending out, haphazard, isolated squadrons, half privateer, half filibuster, with vague orders to cruise about between the Spanish coast and the Azores, on the chance of picking up a rich prize or two on its way home from America or the East Indies. Such a cruise was made under that gallant courtier and freebooter, the Earl of Cumberland, in June, 1589, when he sailed with the Queen's ship the "Victory" and some private ships of his own and others. On the whole he made a sorry mess of the affair until he stumbled by chance on a rich prize with upwards of £100,000, which he took and was bringing home when, by ill fortune, she was wrecked on the English coast.

The same year, Sir Martin Frobisher, with some Queen's ships, set out and plied on and off the coast of Portugal, hoping to intercept any Spanish ships that might escape Cumberland. He succeeded in capturing four prizes, but lost two of these by shipwreck afterwards.

Had these two expeditions been managed so as to work together on the lines Hawkins had advised, the result might have been very much better.

In the meanwhile, John Hawkins was busily preparing six fighting ships of his own at Chatham. When he had his fleet almost ready to sail for the Azores, the Privy Council met to decide "Whether it be convenient that Sir John Hawkins shall proceed in his voyage ?" But after the usual vacillation decided they "thought unmeet for him to go," so an order came to Hawkins to keep his ships where they were, and for Drake to busy himself in fortifying Plymouth and Scilly, just when all danger of another Spanish invasion was at its lowest.

Poor Hawkins ! Was ever a man more sorely tried ? Allowed and even encouraged to spend large sums of his own money in fitting out a fleet for a set purpose and one admitted by the Government to be justified, all his plans were suddenly overthrown because of some idle rumour that Spanish warships were being assembled at Corunna for the conquest of Brittany. Every serious sailor knew the utter impossibility of the thing, but no report or hearsay was too grotesque to fling Elizabeth and her Privy Council into a panic.

In despair Hawkins wrote to Burghley :

" I am many ways burdened and brought behind hand and especially by the overthrow of this journey which I had with great care and cost brought to pass, hoping, as your lordship did see an orderley and sparing beginning, so if it had pleased God that it should have proceeded there should have been seen with God's favour a rare example of government ; but seeing it is thus I can but say the will of God be done. But now, being out of hope that ever I shall perform any royal thing, I do put on a mean mind and humbly pray your lordship to be a good lord to me."

The full bitterness of the gall of disappointment followed very shortly, when news reached England that the "Flota" with five million ducats on board had reached Spain. This was the "Royal thing" that Hawkins had been after, and which in all probability he could have had or in any case a large part of it. It was not only for himself that Hawkins desired the prize money, but he saw, as the Queen and Burghley failed to see, that without this money from America Philip could never rebuild his fleets or ever regain her former sea power for Spain.

After a while the English Government began to recognize that their alarm of a Spanish invasion was without foundation, and granted Hawkins belated permission to carry out his expedition. Even then they spoiled his plan by insisting that two squadrons should go out together, one under the command of Frobisher to the Azores, the other under Hawkins to blockade the Spanish coast to watch for the sailing of the Brittany expedition, which nothing could convince them was a mere bogey.

Hawkins sailed in the "Mary Rose," which became his flagship, while his Vice-Admiral was George Fenner in the "Hope." The four other ships were the "Non-pareil" commanded by his son, Richard, and the "Swiftsure," "Foresight" and "Rainbow."

Frobisher reached the Azores towards the end of July, just too late to meet a consignment of treasure which had left a few days previously in a squadron of "gallizabras," a new type of fast sailing, heavily armed vessel designed to take the place of the former slow sailing clumsy merchantmen that made up the "flotas."

Frobisher, although he captured only a few small prizes, not enough to pay the expenses of the expedition, yet succeeded in creating a panic in the Spanish maritime world.

Hawkins, owing to the eleventh hour orders to watch the Brittany fleet, also failed to carry out what he had

intended. True, he brought home some prizes to Plymouth, after he was called home by the Privy Council in all haste, because fresh rumours were abroad of the Brittany scare.

Even if his voyage was not satisfactory from the point of view of the shareholders, he had proved that it was possible by careful and generous victualling to keep a fleet at sea for five months without any heavy death-roll from hunger and disease.

On his return Hawkins once more took up his pen to write a report to Lord Burghley. He was acutely conscious that his voyage had been a failure, or anyhow would be considered so by the Queen and her advisers, although he knew only too well that the blame was theirs not his. It was in this spirit that he wrote :

“ And thus God’s infallible word is performed, in that the Holy Ghost said, Paul doth plant, Apollos doth water, but God giveth the increase . . . but seeing this hath been the good pleasure of God, I do content myself and hold all to come for the best.”

Elizabeth, who was ever apt to judge such expeditions purely from the narrow view of immediate results in plunder, rather than from the wider view of policy, on being shown Hawkins’ letter, snapped out, in a rage, “ God’s death ! This fool went out a soldier and is come home a divine.”

The following years—until 1594—were chiefly taken up, as far as naval activities against Spain were concerned, with the sending out to the Azores of private or semi-private ventures which, although they harassed the enemy and occasionally brought home a prize, did not prevent most of the treasure ships from reaching Spain, nor hinder the building of new ships of war.

One of these expeditions was that which Lord Thomas

Howard commanded, with Sir Richard Grenville as his Vice-Admiral. It was on this occasion that he was surprised while changing ballast at one of the Islands of the Flores by Admiral Alonzo de Bazan with fifty-five sail, and seven thousand men. Surprised and completely outnumbered, Howard gave the order to retreat, which his fleet did, with the exception of his brave but obstinate Vice-Admiral, who remained alone to fight and perish and so give birth to one of the greatest epics in our naval history and literature.

While the King of Spain continued to build new warships, Elizabeth did nothing, officially, to prevent him. All she did was to lend a Royal ship to some recognized privateer who took a squadron of ships to lurk about the Azores, prize-hunting. The Earl of Cumberland went out with his own fleet strengthened by one of the Queen's, while other dashing freebooter Captains did the same with varying success.

The neighbourhood of the Azores became a veritable happy hunting-ground for the adventurers during the next few years. Every West-of-England squire who could collect together a few ships armed and manned them and sailed to the West. If they could borrow or hire a Royal Navy ship, so much the better, until it came to the share-out of the plunder, for then the Queen demanded her very full share.

No press-gang was needed to man the ships when Martin Frobisher, Captain Robert Crosse, Sir John Burgh or the Earl of Cumberland were known to be off to the Islands, while there were hosts of lesser fry who were ready to try their luck at the game.

John Hawkins sent out his new ship, the "Dainty," which bore the brunt in a fierce attack on the "Madre de Dios," a great East India carrack, which fell to the fierce onslaught. The English got her safely home with her vast and unparalleled cargo worth, by values of to-day,

more than five million pounds, the greatest prize ever taken from the Spaniards.

This bringing home to England of the "Madre de Dios" caused more than a flutter in the Government dovecotes ; it led to mutinies and riots among the seamen both at Dartmouth and Plymouth. The trouble was that the crews of the privateer ships had plundered and pillaged the great prize, in spite of their officers. The officers might have succeeded better had they at least set a better example, but they, or most of them, were so engaged in collecting souvenirs for themselves that every man, from bos'n's mate to cabin boy, seized the opportunity to fill his chest with Spanish doubloons, lace or jewels.

Thus it happened that when the carrack was brought into Dartmouth early in September, 1592, it was found that she had already been stripped of almost all the portable and less bulky part of her cargo, which was safely hidden away in the warships. No sooner were the latter docked at Plymouth than swarms of London Jews came down to the Western port and began haggling for ropes of pearls, gold nuggets and diamond ornaments, with half-drunk tars at the waterside taverns. Sir Robert Cecil, the son of Lord Burghley, hurried down from London to claim for the Queen her share of the plunder. On the road he met men, some mariners, others dealers, who passed by with bundles on their shoulders, leaving behind them a stream of scent of musk and amber, stolen from the great Spanish prize.

The seamen defied the authorities who were sent to make them disgorge their ill-gotten gains. The situation became serious, for the men were become thoroughly out of hand, and nobody could do anything with them. As a last resource Sir Walter Raleigh was released from the Tower and despatched to Plymouth to talk the seamen back to reason.

The same trouble, but to a far less degree, was going on at London, and here Hawkins did his best to restore some order and discipline amongst the out-of-hand crews.

By the cruelty of fate Hawkins' ship, the "Dainty," which deserved most, got nothing but hard knocks, for she had been so battered and hammered by the guns of the "Madre de Dios" that she was too crippled to be in at the death, and the plundering.

She, unlike the rest of the fleet, sailed under jury rig direct to Gravesend. Hawkins, on hearing of her approach, sent out searchers to board her and look for hidden treasure before he consented to go aboard himself.

Long and most unseemly wrangling followed between the Queen and the owners of the privateers, over the division of what plunder was saved from the crews ; and in the end the Queen got the lion's share.

A year later, in 1593, the irrepressible Cumberland was on the war-path once again, this time on his own account and without any Royal patronage, harrying the Spanish shipping off the Azores. By now the English Government had ceased to take more than a casual interest in these sea-rovers, and was more absorbed in the Spanish occupation in Brittany, where, in the following autumn, Martin Frobisher fell mortally wounded while leading an attack at Brest.

Thus it happened that, in the six vital years immediately following the victory over the Armada, the English allowed to slip from their grasp almost everything that had been won for them by their Navy in 1588, all of which would have been saved and much more won; and Spain for ever beaten, if only the wise and bold policy of John Hawkins had been followed.

Ever since the end of 1588 Hawkins had been trying his utmost to be free of all the administrative work of the Navy Board. "I have now gathered together my receipts and payments for eleven years ended the last

of December, 1588," he wrote to Burghley, and finished his letter by pressing for leave to carry out his scheme for blockading the Spanish ports, adding, "I shall go forward the better with ability and courage to furnish this enterprise I have in hand, which shall be a rare example of order and benefit for Her Majesty's service. . . . I hope within eight or ten days to be able to wait upon your lordship that I may at large declare the manner of my proceeding which your lordship will easily conceive to be substantially done and with easy charge; although many make mountains of molehills."

Plead as he might for a chance to be up and doing what was so obviously the right thing, still the Government demurred.

By the spring of 1590 this most tenacious of men began to despair. He described his life as being "careful, miserable, unfortunate and dangerous."

For two more years he endeavoured to rouse the Queen and Lord Burghley to the danger of leaving Spain to recover her power at sea. On July 8th, 1592, he wrote again to the Lord High Treasurer, once more offering to resign if by doing so a younger and a fitter man might be employed to take command of his long cherished project of an Atlantic Cruise. It was a long letter beginning: "When the 'Swiftsure' was launched at Deptford, the ship sitting very hard we were forced to use great violence upon the tackles, whereof one gave way and brake, so as one end of a cable ran by my leg and hurt me in six places." He felt conscious of his failing health and vitality and added: "I would to God the ability of my body and the strength were such as I could thereby promise better, but as it is I will not fail to do the best I can. With me I do confess it is at the best, for I am not able to perform that which I desire to do. Therefore I do most humbly pray your good lordship to be a mean to Her Majesty that some discreet and

able man may be thought upon to supply my place, which to instruct I will abide such a convenient time as shall seem good unto your lordship and I will nevertheless ever during my life attend Her Majesty's service any other way that I shall be appointed where in my experience and skill will serve ; for with good favour of Her Majesty's and your lordship's I shall ever acknowledge myself more bounden than if I had received in gift great treasure."

But all was in vain, even such a gracefully worded resignation as this was without avail. The Queen and Burghley knew only too well that the faithful John Hawkins was indispensable. He might plead, cajole or threaten, but nothing he could do would alter the situation. Most men would have despaired after such continual discouragement, but not so the stubborn Hawkins, who continued to pester Burghley to let him have his own way.

As late as February, 1594, he wrote his final letter on the same subject. It was addressed to "My most honourable and especial good lord," and ran :

" I do send herewith unto your lordship the estate of fifteen years of mine accompts of which nine years are past before your lordship by duplicates, the books of four years are with the auditors, and have been long, and ten years are ready lying by me confirmed by the officers, so as, as much as is in me to do there is no time neglected, yet I am troubled with presses out of the exchequer, the business is very great that is to be performed, my wife is in that weakness yet that I cannot remove her from Deptford, and by that occasion I remain there with my household, this dead time of the year with passing in and out by water I do hardly escape sickness, wherefore I humbly pray your lordship I may have the favour to attend upon my lord chief baron and Mr. Fanshaw, the next term, Her Majesty's service shall be the better

furthered and receive less damage, and so your lordship may have me with God's favour to do Her Majesty's service some longer time.

" After I had served one year in this office I was ever desirous to be delivered from it, Mr. Gonson told me the office was of great care, trouble and charge, and of no benefit, but I would not believe him, when he said I shall pluck a thorn out of my foot and put it into yours, which now I find too true, for I may justly say that beside my ordinary fee and diet, there is not any fees or vayles in all my time worth twenty shillings to me.

" All that I get for my travail and industry otherwise I consume in the attendance in this office, therefore I humbly pray your lordship to favour me to be delivered from this continual thraldom which I mind to procure by all the means I can, and so praying to God for your lordship's health, do humbly take my leave from Deptford the — of February, 1593.

" Your lordship's ever most bounden,  
" JOHN HAWKYNs."

At last, after persistent pleading, the Treasurer found himself free of office cares and once again preparing for a voyage, one object of which was to look for and rescue his only son Richard.

This son, the only child of Katherine Hawkins, was born at Plymouth in 1562, and was, like every true Hawkins, brought up to the sea life. In his father's and uncle's ships and shipyards the boy had learned the whole art of seamanship.

It was not until he was twenty years old that Richard made his first long voyage, when he sailed with his uncle, William Hawkins, to the West Indies, and showed great courage and ability. From this time onwards he seems to have spent most of his life at sea, having little taste for the counting-house or other employment on shore

Three years later, Richard Hawkins sailed under Drake and Frobisher in command of his own vessel, the "Duck." The fleet was a large one for a filibustering affair, consisting as it did of 25 ships, with 2300 soldiers and mariners, of whom 750 ultimately died of disease on the coast of Central America.

After the return of this expedition young Hawkins was admitted to the freedom of Plymouth, when, in honour of the occasion, he contributed towards the fund raised to reimburse Francis Drake for the conduit he had made to bring water to the town.

Against the Armada, in command of one of his father's ships, the "Swallow," he fought in every engagement, while his ship suffered more severely than any other from the Spanish gunfire.

No sooner was he back in England, after the final defeat of the Armada, than Richard Hawkins had built for himself a new ship in which to attempt a voyage around the world, in the footsteps of Francis Drake.

She was between three and four hundred tons, and "was finished in that perfection as could be required for she was pleasing to the eye, profitable for storage, good of sail, and well conditioned." Thus it was the proud young owner described the ship he had himself designed and built, in a book he wrote called "The Observations of Sir Richard Hawkins in his voyage into the South Sea." In this book he recounts how his ship came to receive her name. "The day of her launching being appointed, the Lady Hawkins (my step-mother) named her the 'Repentance'; and although many times I expostulated with her, to declare the reason for giving her that uncouth name, I could never have any satisfaction, than that repentance was the safest ship we could sail in to purchase the haven of Heaven. . . . The 'Repentance' being put into perfection, and riding at Deptford, the Queen's majesty passing by her to her

palace at Greenwich, commanded her bargemen to row round about her, and viewing her from port to stern, disliked nothing but her name, and said she would christen her anew, and that henceforth she should be called the 'Dainty'; which name she brooked well, having taken (for her Majesty) a great Byscen of 500 tons, under the conduct of Sir Martin Frobisher; a caracke bound for the East Indies, under my father's charge; and the principal cause of taking the great caracke, the 'Madre de Dios,' brought to Dartmouth by Sir John Borrough and the Earl of Cumberland's ships, anno 1592, with others of moment in other voyages. To us she never brought but loss, trouble and care. Therefore my father resolved to sell her, though with some loss, which he imparted to me; and for that I had ever a particular love unto her, and a desire she should continue ours, I offered to ease him of the charge and care of her and to take her with all her furniture at the price he had before taken her of me with the resolution to put into execution for which she was first builded."

At length the great adventure which Richard Hawkins had so long dreamed of began to take definite shape. By the end of March, with the help of his father, all was ready for the start, and "having taken my unhappy last leave of my father, Sir John Hawkins, and coming to Barking we might see my ship at an anchor." Arriving at Plymouth on April 26th, the small fleet was victualled and all was ready for the final departure, when a sudden westerly gale sprang up, which dismasted the "Dainty." Richard then went ashore, and "coming to my house to shift me, being wet to the skin, I had not well changed my clothes when a servant of mine enters almost out of breath with news, that the pinnace was beating upon the rocks, which though I knew to be remediless, I put myself in place where I might see her, and in a little time

after she sank downright." True Hawkins that he was, he faced this further misfortune with the same fortitude his father would have shown. "These losses and mischances troubled and grieved, but nothing daunted me : *Si fortuna me tormenta ; Esperanca me contenta.*" Richard Hawkins was not to be discouraged, for he writes "the storm ceasing, I began to get in the 'Dainty' to mast her anew, and to recover the 'Fancy' my pinnace, which with the help and furtherance of my wife's father who supplied all my wants, together with my credit (which I thank God was unspotted) in ten days put all in former state, or better."

The story of this famous voyage may be read in the pages of Richard Hawkins' own book.

After sailing for several months, with fortune sometimes for, but more often against them, they got through the Straits of Magellan and reached the South Pacific Ocean.

After various adventures, the English filibusters met with a powerful Spanish fleet, sent out to search for them by the Viceroy of Peru.

For three days an unequal battle raged, the English fighting stubbornly in spite of heavy odds, until Hawkins was wounded and his ship smashed to pieces. At last, when it was evident that the fight was lost, and his ship on the point of foundering, the English Admiral accepted the terms of surrender offered by the Spanish Admiral, Don Beltran de Castro, who swore that the prisoners should be sent back to England as speedily as possible, and gave Hawkins, as a token of good faith, his glove. But, alas, for Spanish promises and honour, the prisoners were not released, and for many years they remained in captivity. In all fairness to de Castro, it must be recorded that he did everything in his power to persuade the King of Spain to liberate Hawkins, but nevertheless the English commander was sent to Spain, and there

cast into prison, where he languished until the end of 1602, when he was at last set free on the payment of a huge ransom of £12,000.

It was in the January following after an absence of ten years that Richard Hawkins returned to England, to find himself a ruined man. But no Hawkins ever admitted himself defeated for long, and Richard was no exception. The Queen made him a knight, and appointed him Vice-Admiral of Devon, while the electors of Plymouth returned him as member for their borough in Parliament.

At the age of sixty, when giving evidence before the Privy Council, Sir Richard Hawkins dropped dead, and so ended the earthly career of the "Compleat Seaman."



## CHAPTER XIV

### THE LAST VOYAGE



HE Azores, after being for several years the happy hunting-ground of the English privateers, began to grow barren of spoils. The Spaniards had learned their lesson, and instead of giving up the struggle, had adapted themselves to the new and altered circumstances. As has already been mentioned, they

no longer sent home to Europe their treasure from the Spanish Main in the bulky old galleons, but in the new fast-sailing gallizabras. The result of this policy was that fewer and fewer prizes fell to those English ships that lay in wait off the Islands. But the Spanish had done more than improve their ships. When Hawkins made his three famous slaving voyages, the Spanish settlements were in a state of helplessness. They might withstand the sudden attack of a French pirate, but were at the mercy of any small but well-armed and well-disciplined English fleet. When the English first found their way into the Pacific, they met ships laden with valuables of almost untold wealth, sailing from port to port, unarmed and helpless, which surrendered to a few boat-loads of armed sailors. Such to a less extent had been the state of things in the West Indies and on the Spanish Main, up to the time of the Armada, in 1588.

The last eight years had not been wasted by King Philip, though the English Government had not fully appreciated the change which had taken place.

The new expedition of 1595 had been talked of for three years ; talked of too loudly, as was proved later on.

The original plan had been for a small armed party to land at Nombre de Dios, march quickly across the Isthmus and then attack the city of Panama. This was to be plundered and the booty got away as soon as possible. The idea is supposed to have been suggested by Drake, and would have been one quite after his own heart and adapted to his genius. At the last moment, just as the expedition was about to start, news reached England of an abandoned galleon with a huge treasure on board, at Porto Rico, and the original plan was altered to go after this instead of carrying out the rather wild project of sacking Panama.

The Queen chose, or agreed to the choice of, a dual command, Sir John Hawkins and Sir Francis Drake. This was mistake number one, and the cause of the ultimate fiasco. True, she had nominated the two most famous, successful and skilful seamen in Europe, but it was like yoking together a thoroughbred Clydesdale with a race-horse to draw a plough, as to expect these two men to pull successfully together. Had either gone alone anything might have happened, while with a dual command only one thing could result, and this was disaster.

The two Commanders were so utterly different. Hawkins, nine years the older, was a plodding, careful, painstaking man, who saw to every detail himself, who took no unnecessary risks, and who never sailed nor sent out any expedition without seeing that even the smallest detail was complete. In the words of one who knew him, he was all for "good order." He might have a slow brain, but he was methodical and thorough to the last degree.

The younger man was the opposite. Quick of mind, prompt to sum up a new situation, never hesitating for a moment on his line of action, never brooking any inter-

ference and scornful of the advice of others, he would have no patience with his old friend, relation and teacher. As to detail, he hated the very word. When Drake went on the warpath he left such matters as supplies and victuals to others, or to take care of themselves. Hawkins, though the kindest Commander to his crews that ever sailed a ship, maintained strict discipline ; Drake, born Commander that he was, was no disciplinarian, although he could quell a mutiny, or a threat of one, with the utmost severity.

These characteristics of the two Admirals were observed and commented on by one Captain Thomas Maynard, a military officer who accompanied the fleet and kept a journal. In writing of the dual command, he points out that although the very name of Sir Francis Drake would strike terror to the Spaniards in the West Indies, yet he was a child of fortune and so very self-willed and peremptory "as to cause Her Majesty to join Sir John Hawkins in equal commission—a man old and wary, entering into matters with so laden a foot, that the other's meat would be eaten before his spit could come to the fire. Men of so different natures and dispositions that what one desireth the other would commonly oppose against." He goes on to add that although the two attempted to hide their differences while at Plymouth, yet it was common knowledge that they were continually at loggerheads.

The agreement of terms for the venture was drawn up between the Queen and Hawkins. Doubtless Drake did not want to be bothered with such dull details and knew he could safely leave this necessary business to his wise old relative.

Sir Thomas Gorges, reporting from Plymouth to Cecil about the agreement, remarked : "Sir John Hawkins is an excellent man in these things ; he sees all things done orderly."

As to the cost of the expedition, the chief subscriber was Sir John, to the tune of £18,662, while Drake invested £12,842, both very large sums of money in the sixteenth century.

The Queen's share was to contribute six of her Royal ships, in good order and repair, for which she was to receive one-third of any or all the booty brought home; which goes to show that she was every bit as shrewd at business as was her Admiral. Added to the ships supplied by the Queen, Hawkins and Drake, were a number of private vessels lent on a profit-sharing basis by various sea captains and ship owners.

The fleet, when assembled at Plymouth, amounted to twenty-seven ships. Six of these were the Royal ships lent by the Queen, the remainder being private vessels provided by various adventurers.

The Queen's ships included the "Defiance," "Hope," "Bonaventure," "Garland," "Adventure," and "Foresight."

Hawkins sailed in the "Garland," while Drake chose for himself the "Defiance," both of them new galleons, built after the model of the "Revenge."

Of seamen and soldiers there were in all some 2500.

The soldier in command of the land forces was Sir Thomas Baskerville, an officer of the highest reputation.

While the fleet was receiving its final touches before departure, great excitement was caused by a sudden raid on the Cornish coast by four Spanish galleys, which had unexpectedly come over from Brittany. They landed a party of four hundred soldiers near Penzance, attacked and set on fire the town, stole what they could, and with a few prisoners hurriedly re-embarked and disappeared, and no great damage resulted.

Shortly, before the fleet sailed, Drake and Hawkins wrote a letter to Lord Burghley, referring to the loss of

some small English vessels off the Spanish coast. It runs :

“ Our duty in most humble manner remembered, it may please your Lordship, we have answered her Majestie’s letter we hope to her Highness’ contentment whom we would not willingly displease.

“ We humbly thank your Lordship for your manifold favours which we have always found never variable, but with all favour, love and constancy, for which we can never be sufficiently thankful, but with our prayers to God long to bless your good lordship with honour and wealth.

“ We think it be true, that some small men-of-war be taken upon the coast of Spain, but they are of very small moment ; they be for the most part such small carvels as was before this taken from the Spaniards. Some small number of our men are yet in Spain, which is the only loss, but as we learn, there be not above one hundred left in Spain of them, but many returned already unto England. And so looking daily for a good wind, we humbly take our leave.

“ From Plymouth, the 18th of August, 1595.

“ Your Lordship’s ever most bounden,

“ FRA. DRAKE.

“ JOHN HAWKINS.”

After the usual vicissitudes which seemed bound to delay any of Elizabeth’s enterprises, the fleet weighed on August 28th, 1595, and sailed out of Plymouth harbour. Before stepping on board his flagship, the “Garland,” Hawkins bade farewell to his daughter-in-law, Mistress Judith, and his little grandchild.

Probably the principal reason that urged John Hawkins to undertake so hazardous a voyage was to search for his son Richard, and if possible rescue him

from some Spanish prison and restore him to his home, his wife and little son ; and nothing, not even his failing health, would prevent him from embarking on his quest.

One of his last acts had been to make a codicil to his will, by which he directed that " forasmuch as the said Richard Hawkins is supposed to be taken and detained prisoner in the Indies, therefore my mind and will is if the said Richard shall not return unto this Realme of England within the space of three years, . . . that then the said Dame Margaret shall be my whole and sole Executrix . . . and shall pay for and towards his redemption and ransom in the sum of £3000."

He also added a few more legacies for friends and relatives and directed that " all the legacies before given to my servants be doubled."

At the very start of the voyage there was almost a disaster, when the " Hope " ran aground on the Eddy-stone Reef, but she was with some difficulty got off without sustaining any serious damage. Sailing south-west, the fleet bade farewell to the Devonshire coast, and as the hills of Dartmoor grew distant and at last sank below the horizon, for the last time in their lives, Hawkins and Drake gazed upon their native land.

There was now no time to be lost ; already they were several months behind their time-table, and each day the danger became greater that the Spanish Government would learn the object of the expedition, and be warned in time. This indeed was what had already happened. As long ago as April past, news had reached the West Indies that they were in danger of a raid. In June, Lord Burghley had been informed by an English spy in Lisbon that the Azores and the Canaries were being fortified, and that a strong fleet of twenty-five vessels was being prepared for sea. The significance of all this news was only too apparent to Drake and Hawkins. Obviously the success of the venture depended on surprise,

and at all costs the English fleet must reach Porto Rico before the Spanish one.

When four days out from Plymouth, Hawkins signalled for a council to be held aboard the "Garland." This was the usual procedure, and was done so that no news of the intended plan should leak out before leaving port.

When the officers forming the council were assembled on board and gathered round the table in the great cabin, Sir Francis Drake revealed a fact of the gravest importance. Apparently he had embarked in his ships three hundred more men than his proper complement, and he foresaw all too late that he had not nearly enough rations to feed so many men during the long journey to Porto Rico. This act of criminal folly, for it was nothing else, was one which Hawkins would never have been guilty of. Drake coolly proposed that Hawkins should take on board his ships the greater number of his surplus men. This Hawkins absolutely refused to do, and did not mince his words, but "gave no other hearing to this motion, but seemed to dislike that he (Drake) should bring more than was concluded betwixt them and this drew them to some choleric speeches. But Sir John would not receive any (men) unless he were entreated, and to this Sir Francis' stout heart could never be driven." This was how Thomas Maynard described the scene at the council meeting, which is confirmed by another witness, Captain John Troughton, who recounts "there passed many unkind speeches and such as Sir John Hawkins never put off till death." For the time being, however, the peace was made, and other matters discussed, such as suitable rendezvous in the case of the fleet being dispersed in stormy weather, and what allowances the men should be put on.

As the officers came up on deck to return to their various ships the quarrel broke out again as hot as ever,

and old John Hawkins lost his temper altogether and talked at the top of his loud voice "revealing the places whither we were bound in the hearing of the basest mariner, observing therein no warlike or provident advice, nor was it ever amended till the time of their deaths."

However, the only thing now was to hurry on, to be in time at Porto Rico, but only a few days later a signal for another council was seen flying, this time from the "Defiance." On coming aboard the ship, the officers were told by Drake that matters were even more serious than had appeared at the previous council.

Bluntly he informed his brother officers that he found it impossible to proceed to Porto Rico without first calling somewhere for more provisions for his men. His proposal was to land at Madeira or Grand Canary, and seize by force of arms what was required.

The council was far from being unanimous over the question ; some, including the soldier, Baskerville, being for Drake, the rest siding with Hawkins for an uninterrupted voyage to the West Indies. Hawkins again laid the blame on Drake for his carelessness in coming unprovided, and he refused to be a party to any alteration of their prearranged plans or to take over part of Drake's superfluous men, unless Drake would acknowledge his fault. Apparently another childish scene took place, on the one side old Hawkins, refusing to help unless Drake confessed to having made a stupid blunder, on the other Drake, pig-headedly refusing to acknowledge his offence.

"Now," writes Maynarde, "the fire which lay hid in their stomachs began to break forth and had not the coronell (Baskerville) pacified them would have grown farther ; but their heat somewhat abated and they concluded to dine next day aboard the 'Garland' with Sir John."

Hawkins, knowing the Canary Islands well, felt

strongly, and said so in no uncertain terms, that a hostile landing on the Islands would be a very big undertaking and even if successful might let slip the opportunity of getting to Porto Rico in time. This sensible advice would have carried the day, had not Baskerville rashly boasted that with his soldiers he would be able to capture Las Palmas in four hours, and that within four days he would collect all the victuals they needed as well as ransom, and that on the fifth day they would be ready to continue their voyage.

Still the two commanders refused to be reconciled, Drake threatening to go off to the Canaries on his own account with any ships which would follow him, while Hawkins, already a sick man, declared he would continue by himself with his ships to the Indies without Drake.

In the end a peace was patched up at the dinner on Hawkins' ship, "when it was resolved that we should put for the Grand Canary though, in my conscience, whatsoever his tongue said, Sir John's heart was against." So in the end the headstrong Drake got his own way as he usually did, and on September 27th the fleet came in sight of Las Palmas.

No sooner were the anchors down than Drake was off to reconnoitre a suitable spot for the storming troops to land, while Baskerville got his 1400 soldiers into the boats.

The place chosen by Drake was a stretch of sandy beach which ran between the town and the fort, and where if the sea had only been calm the troops could probably have got a footing on shore. But as it chanced the sea was rough, with great breakers which threatened to overturn the small boats. While the General and the Admirals discussed the chances of being able to land the boats in the wild surf, the Spaniards, already warned, were working furiously digging trenches for their 900 soldiers and emplacements for the field pieces.

The more Drake examined the situation the less he liked it, and in the end the troops were taken back to the ships. Maynarde, who always had some advice ready for all occasions, said that if instead of wasting time making observations "we had landed under the fort at our first coming to anchor, we had put fair to be possessors of the town, for the delays gave the enemy great stomachs and daunted our own, it being the first service our new men were brought into, and it was to be doubted they would prove the worse the whole journey following."

Once the soldiers were back aboard the ships the fleet weighed and ignominiously sailed away and stood along to the western end of Grand Canary, where the parties were landed to get water.

Others went ashore "for pleasure" and amongst them was Captain Grimston, a soldier, who with several other officers and men climbed a neighbouring hill. Suddenly the party was attacked by a troop of herdsmen armed with staves, and by their savage dogs. The unfortunate Grimston with several men was killed, and the rest of his companions wounded and taken prisoner. Amongst these was the surgeon of the "Solomon."

In the end the fleet had to leave without procuring any provisions, and yet reached the West Indies without any difficulty through want of victuals ; a strong point in favour of the policy of John Hawkins for sailing direct and for not stopping at the Canaries.

Not only had valuable time been lost over Drake's piratical enterprise, but the troops had become thoroughly demoralized. Even worse had happened, for in the night of September 27th, without their knowledge, the Governor of the Island had despatched a swift-sailing caravel to Porto Rico to give warning of the coming danger, which was believed to have been wrung out of the ship's surgeon who was captured with

Grimston, and who, under pressure, had disclosed the plans and destinations of the English fleet.

The voyage across the Atlantic was uneventful except for a severe storm which scattered the fleet just before it reached Guadeloupe, on October 28th. This was the pre-arranged rendezvous, but by the 30th two of the smallest craft, the "Dainty" and the "Francis," had not arrived. Then the "Dainty" arrived with the news that when the storm rose she and the "Francis" were sailing several miles behind the rest of the fleet. As the weather cleared the sailors on the English vessels saw five large ships which they took to be their consorts and closed up to them. Too late it was discovered that these tall ships were five heavily armed gallizabras sent out by the King of Spain on purpose to bring home the treasure from Porto Rico. Taken by surprise, the little "Francis" after a gallant but hopeless fight was captured, though the "Dainty" managed to escape and brought the bad news to the Admirals at Guadeloupe. Bad news indeed, for it meant that when the Spanish ships reached Porto Rico all hope of a surprise would be gone for ever. This last blow to their hopes appears to have broken the spirit of Hawkins, who henceforth took but little active part in the voyage and spent much of his time in his cabin.

Drake was all for pursuing the Spaniards, either with the whole or part of the fleet, but the more cautious and now dying Hawkins would not consent, for, he pointed out, it would be a practical impossibility to capture all the Spanish fleet, for it was probable there were more than the five ships reported by the "Dainty," and if only one of these escaped to reach Porto Rico with the news, the result would be the same as if the whole fleet had got through. Drake gave way for once to Hawkins, partly because Sir Nicholas Clifforde sided with the elder Admiral, and partly, according to Maynarde, because

Hawkins "was sickly, Sir Francis being loath to breed his further disquiet."

Instead of giving chase to the five Spanish ships, Hawkins stopped at Guadeloupe "to trim his ships, mount his ordnance, take in water, set by some new pinnaces, and to make things in that readiness that he cared not to meet the King's whole fleet."

Had they but known it, the despatch-boat sent by the Governor of Grand Canary had arrived at Porto Rico with the warning on the same day that the English fleet anchored at Guadeloupe.

Since all hope of surprise had been lost, there was now no reason to hurry, and it was not until November 4th that the fleet sailed from Guadeloupe and anchored four days later at the Virgin Islands, lying to the westward of Porto Rico. For three days the soldiers were drilled and exercised on land by their officers so that "every man might know his colours."

Each day Sir John became more ill and was by now so weak that he had to remain in his cabin and leave everything to Sir Francis.

On the afternoon of the 11th the fleet sailed, and at three o'clock the next afternoon dropped anchor off Porto Rico. At the same hour the brave but broken old Admiral gave his soul to God.

With his death our story ends. The ill-fated expedition attacked the town, which fell after great losses on both sides. Instead of doubloons and pieces of eight, they received little but hard knocks and cannon balls, for the treasure had been removed into safe hiding. Officers and men had lost heart with the death of Hawkins, and none more than Drake himself. In spite of all their differences, Hawkins and Drake had a deep respect and affection for each other.

After leaving Porto Rico Drake led his fleet to the scene of his and his old master's successes in years gone

by, the Spanish Main. They took La Hacha and other towns, but got little plunder. At Nombre de Dios they did better, and from here Baskerville led his troops across the Isthmus to attack and plunder Panama, but the enterprise ended in dismal failure ; the soldiers were ambushed from all sides, and after suffering heavy casualties struggled back beaten and demoralized. This last blow completed Drake's misery ; although he kept a stiff upper lip when he informed his Captains that the next move would be to the harbour of Trujillo, on the coast of Honduras, a place famous for its stores of gold.

On the way thither, after battling against contrary winds, the fleet put in at the island of Escudo de Veragua, to clean and water. At this fever-stricken spot the wind kept them prisoner until dysentery broke out and swept through the worn-out crews. At length Drake himself became infected with the disease, and by January 23rd he was too weak to leave his cabin. Four days later the fleet managed to get away from this land of pestilence and ran before the wind for Porto Bello, but before reaching that port Francis Drake was dead. Thus, within a short space of time, England's two greatest seamen perished, far away from home, in the Golden West, where in earlier years they both had won glory for themselves and their country.

Hawkins died at the age of 63, worn out with years of toil. For years also, he had been a constant sufferer from malaria, before the secret of quinine had been wrung from the Peruvian Indians. Just before leaving England on his last voyage, news had reached him of the capture and disappearance of his only son, Richard. From its very commencement the voyage had been a series of troubles and quarrels, bickerings and misunderstandings with his kinsman, Francis Drake.

Details of the last scene in the cabin of the "Garland" where the sick old Admiral lay, are all too scanty. May-

narde, for once, is brief, the entry in his diary simply stating, "we came to anchor before Porterrico on the twelfth, about three of the clock in the afternoon, at what time Sir John Hawkins died." Another witness, who was by the Admiral's side when he died, Captain Troughton, was given a message to the Queen, which he delivered in the following letter on his return to England:

" Sir John Hawkins on his deathbed, willed me to use the best means I could to acquaint Your Highness with his loyal service and good meaning towards Your Majesty, even to his last breathing ; as foreasmuch as, through the perverse and cross dealings of some in that journey, who, preferring their own fancy before his skill, would never yield but rather overrule him, whereby he was so discouraged, and as himself then said his heart even broken, that he saw no other but danger of ruin of the whole voyage, wherein in some sort he had been a persuader of Your Majesty to hazard as well some of your good ships as also a good quantity of treasure, in regard of the good opinion he thought to be held of his sufficiency, judgement and experience in such actions ; willingly to make Your Majesty the best amends his poor ability could then stretch unto, in a codicil as a piece of his last will and testament did bequeath unto Your Highness two thousand pounds, if Your Majesty will take it ; for that, as he said, Your Highness had in your possession a far greater sum of his, which he then did also release ; which £2000, if Your Majesty should accept thereof, his will is, should be deducted out of his lady's portion and out of all such legacies and bequests as he left to any of his servants and friends or kinsfolk whosoever, as by the said codicil appeareth."

Looking back to-day, after a space of more than three hundred years, we cannot but rejoice that John Hawkins

did not survive to return to England, to find himself a disgraced and broken man. How much better it was that he should end his splendid career in the American Indies, where as a young man he cut such a gallant and brilliant figure.

Within sound and sight of the Spanish guns, the old Admiral was committed to the sea, and no more fitting grave could have been chosen.

An epitaph was afterwards written by Richard Barnfield, the poet, to describe this scene, which contained the following stanza of well-meaning if ill-executed verse :

“ The waters were his Winding sheet,  
The sea was made his tomb ;  
Yet for his fame the ocean sea  
Was not sufficient room.”<sup>1</sup>

Two other monuments were raised by his widow and second wife, Margaret, daughter of Charles Vaughan of Hergest. This lady was bedchamber woman to the Queen, and survived her husband twenty-six years, dying in 1621.

One of these was a handsome monument erected to her husband in the chancel of St. Dunstan's-in-the-East, where he had been a worshipper for a great number of years. This church perished in the great fire of 1666 and the monument no longer exists ; but the following was the wording of the inscription :

“ Johannes Hawkins, Eques Auratis, clariss. Reginæ Marinarum causarum Thesaurarius. Qui cum xliii annos muniis bellicis et longis periculosisque navigatibus, detegendis novis regionibus, ad Patriæ utilitatem, et suam ipsius gloriam, strenuam et egregiam operam navasset, in expeditione, cui Generalis præfit ad Indiam occidentalem dum in anchoris ad portum S. Joannis in

<sup>1</sup> In reference to the old naval term “ sea-room.”

insula Beriquena staret, placide in Domino ad cœlestem patriam emigravit, 12 die Novembris anno salutis 1595. In cuius memoriam ob virtutem et res gestas Domina Margareta Hawkins, Uxor mœstissima hoc monumen-  
tum cum lachrymis posuit."

According to the indefatigable Stow, Lady Hawkins, not content with this, "hung a fair table" by the tomb, "fastened in the wall, with these verses in English."

The authorship of these verses is not known, but it is possible they were written by the widow herself, in any case they possess a certain straightforwardness which has a fascination of its own. Apparently the "fair table" was made yet fairer by the portraits of the two relicts, but these, alas, also perished in the fire :

<p>" Dame Margaret, A widow well affected, This monument Of memory erected, Deciphering Unto the viewer's right The life and death Of Sir John Hawkins, Knight ; One fearing God And loyal to his Queen, True to the State, By trial ever seen, Kind to his wives, Both gentlewomen born, Whose counterfeits With grace this work adorn. Dame Katherine, 'The first, of rare report, Dame Margaret 'The last, of Court consort, Attendant on The chamber and the bed Of England's Queen Elizabeth our head,</p>	<p>Next unto Christ Of whom all princes hold Their sceptres, states, And diadems of gold. Free to their friends On either side his kin Careful to keep The credit he was in. Unto the seamen Beneficial. As testifieth Chatham Hospital. The poor of Plymouth And of Deptford Town Have had, now have, And shall have, many a crown. Proceeding from His liberality By way of great And gracious legacy, This Parish of St. Dunstan standing east (Wherein he dwelt Full thirty years at least)</p>
---	---

Hath of the springs  
 Of his good will a part,  
 Derived from  
 The fountain of his heart,  
 All which bequests,  
 With many more unsaid,  
 Dame Margaret  
 Hath bountifully paid.  
 Deep of conceit,  
 In speaking grave and wise,  
 Endighting swift  
 And pregnant to devise.  
 In conference  
 Revealing haughty skill,  
 In all affairs  
 Having a worthie's will ;  
 On sea and land,  
 Spending his course and time,  
 By steps of years  
 As to age did climb.  
 God hath his soul,  
 The sea his body keeps,  
 Where, (for a while)  
 As Jonas now he sleeps ;  
 Till He which said  
 To Lazarus, Come forth,  
 Awakes this Knight,  
 And gives to him his worth,  
 In Christian faith  
 And faithful penitence,  
 In quickening hope  
 And constant patience,  
 He running ran  
 A faithful pilgrim's race,

God giving him  
 The guidance of His Grace,  
 Ending his life  
 With his experience  
 By deep decree  
 Of God's high providence.  
 His years to six times  
 Ten and three amounting  
 The ninth the seventh  
 Climacterick by counting.  
 Dame Katherine,  
 His first religious wife,  
 Saw years thrice ten  
 And two of mortal life,  
 Leaving the world the sixth,  
 The seventh ascending,  
 Thus he and she  
 Alike their compass ending,  
 Asunder both  
 By death and flesh alone,  
 Together both in soul,  
 Two making one,  
 Among the saints above,  
 From troubles free,  
 Where two in one shall meet  
 And make up three,  
 The Christian Knight  
 And his good ladies twain,  
 Flesh, soul and spirit  
 United once again ;  
 Beholding Christ,  
 Who comfortably saith,  
 Come, mine elect,  
 Receive the crown of faith.

## L'ENVY

Give God, saith Christ,  
 Give Cæsar lawful right,  
 Owe no man, saith St. Paul,  
 Ne mire, ne mite

Save love, which made  
 This chaste memorall  
 Subscribed with  
 Truths testimoniall.

The “great and gracious” legacies referred to so

gracefully by his widow were contained in a long and elaborate will drawn up and witnessed by John Hawkins on March 3rd, 1594.

In this his first thoughts were for the poor of Plymouth, "St. Dunstans in the East London where I dwell," and Deptford. A handsome jointure was left to his wife, Dame Margaret, while to the Queen he gave "as a testimony of my true zeal and loyalty, a jewel of the value of 200 marks." "To my very good Lord William Lord Burghlie High Treasurer of England" was left the sum of one hundred pounds. Not a friend, high or low, was forgotten. To Lord Howard of Effingham, High Admiral of England, he bequeathed "my best diamond." To his "very good cousin, Sir Francis Drake, Knight, my best jewel which is a cross of emeralds." His brother-in-law, Benjamin Gonson, was to receive his best basin and ewer of silver and gilt. Every friend, relative and servant was remembered by this gracious man; and the residue of his estate was left in trust of his widow for his son Richard.



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